DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 322 659 EC 231 845

AUTHOR	Barcus, Michael, Ed.; And Others
TITLE	Supported Employment Implementation Issues. A Summary of Discussions from the VCU RRTC-Employment Network Issues Forum: Future Directions for Supported Employment.
INSTITUTION	Oregon Univ., Eugene. Employment Network.; Virginia Commonwealth Univ., Richmond. Rehabilitation Research and Training Center.
SPONS AGENCY	National Inst. on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (ED/OSERS), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	Nov 88
CONTRACT	300-87-0057; H133B80052
NOTE	149p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Virginia Commonwealth University, Rehabilitation Research and Training Center, 1314 West Main St., VCU Box 2011, Richmond, VA 23284-2011 ($13.95).
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - Conference Proceedings (021) -- Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Adults; *Delivery Systems; Economic Development; Financial Support; Marketing; Program Development; *Program Implementation; *Program Improvement; *Severe Disabilities; Social Integration; Staff Development; *Supported Employment; Systems Development; Technical Assistance

ABSTRACT

This monograph aims to provide a blueprint for: (1) expanded supported employment implementation for individuals with disabilities; and (2) improvement in service delivery practices. It contains edited summaries of the discussions of five working groups from a major forum on national supported employment issues which was convened in Williamsburg, Virginia, in May 1988. The five working groups covered: systems change/conversion, integration and empowerment, in-state economic development and marketing, long-term funding, and technical assistance and staff development. Each working group identified issues relevant to its topic; identified components of each issue; and specified progress, resources, and challenges related to the issues. An introductory paper describes how the issues forum was designed and how topical areas and formats were determined. A concluding paper notes that the issues forum marked a change in expectations from beginning a social change initiative to extending the reality of integrated jobs with long-term support to all persons with severe disabilities. (JDD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

ED322659

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
● Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Supported Employment Implementation Issues

A Summary of Discussions
from the VCU RRTC–Employment
Network Issues Forum:
Future Directions
for Supported Employment

EDITED BY:
Michael Barcus
Susan Griffin
David Mank
Larry Rhodes
Sherril Moon

EC231845

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Supported Employment Implementation Issues

November, 1988

Edited by:

Michael Barcus

Virginia Commonwealth University

Susan Griffin

Virginia Commonwealth University

David Mank

University of Oregon

Larry Rhodes

University of Oregon

Sherril Moon

Virginia Commonwealth University

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center
School of Education
Virginia Commonwealth University
Richmond, Virginia 23284-2011

The development and dissemination of this monograph was supported by contract number 300-87-0057 from the U.S. Department of Education awarded to The Employment Network, University of Oregon, and grant number H133B80052 from the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, U.S. Department of Education awarded to the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center, Virginia Commonwealth University.

© Virginia Commonwealth University, 1988
This material may be duplicated for dissemination without profit.

We wish to acknowledge the outstanding
editing efforts of Rachel Conrad in completing
the final version of this monograph.

Table of Contents

Page

Acknowledgements i

Introduction iii
by Paul Wehman

Issues Forum Mission and Development 1
by Susan Griffin and Michael Barcus

Systems Change/Conversion. 13
by John Kregel and Rebecca McDonald

Integration and Empowerment in the Workplace 45
by Michael Shafer and Jan Nisbet

In-State Economic Development and Marketing. 73
by Patricia Goodall, Dale Verstegen,
and John Nietupski

Long-Term Funding. 101
by Sherril Moon and John Stern

Technical Assistance and Staff Development 121
by Jane Everson and Candace O'Neill

Issues Forum: A Change in Expectations. 139
by David Mank

Acknowledgements

The development of this summary and the implementation of the "Issues Forum" has been accomplished due to the diligent work and commitment of many people from around the nation. Each and every person who participated in the Forum contributed to the development of this monograph through their feedback, questions, ideas, and suggestions. We are indebted to them for their frankness and support.

Collaboration between the Employment Network sub-contractors was a key element in the successful planning and implementation of the Issues Forum. We owe thanks to Karen Danley from Boston University, Karen Flippo and Richard Robinson from the University of San Francisco, John Nietupski from the University of Northern Iowa, Dale Verstegen from the Wisconsin Community Finance Authority, Michael Collins from the University of Vermont, and Jay Buckley from the University of Oregon, who gave freely of their time and expertise throughout this project.

We wish to thank Paul Wehman for his insight and participation in the planning and implementation of the Issues Forum and his support throughout the process.

In addition, we are indebted to the moderators -- John Stern, Rebecca McDonald, Candace O'Neill, John Nietupski and Dale Verstegen, and Jan Nisbet -- and facilitators -- Sherril Moon, John Kregel, Patricia Goodall, Jane Everson, and Michael Shafer -- for their hard work, diligence, and courage in playing a key role in the Issues Forum and in the reporting of the discussions for this monograph.

Our appreciation is also extended to Vicki Brooke and Katty Inge, who helped to keep all of the working groups organized and running smoothly. Many thanks to them for their assistance in planning the Issues Forum.

Finally, but very importantly, our thanks to Jan Smith and Rachel Conrad for performing the behind the scenes work that enabled this project to come to successful completion. Jan and Rachel were responsible for setting up a system to transpose all of the working group material into the base text for this monograph. Our deepest appreciation goes to them for their organization, typing, proofing, and support. Thanks, Jan and Rachel, for remembering everything that we forgot and for knowing when to say, "Wouldn't it sound better this way?"

Mike Barcus
Susan Griffin
Dave Mank
Larry Rhodes
Sherril Moon

Introduction

In May, 1988 a major forum on national supported employment issues was convened in Williamsburg, Virginia. Approximately 100 professionals and advocates from around the United States who are heavily involved in supported employment came together to intensely discuss five major topics. All 27 supported employment model demonstration sites sent representative personnel to participate. The names of the participants and their agencies are listed throughout this document. The five topics included: 1) Systems Change/Conversion; 2) Integration and Empowerment; 3) In-State Economic Development and Marketing; 4) Long-Term Funding; and 5) Technical Assistance and Staff Development. These topics were studies in-depth by groups at the Forum and major recommendations were advanced. This conference was co-sponsored by the Virginia Commonwealth University Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Supported Employment and the University of Oregon Employment Network.

The strategy which was used for studying problems across all five groups was as follows:

1) Define the problem and, concomitantly, issues within the problem;
2) Describe the progress made to date and resources available for problem resolution; and
3) Describe the challenges which face the nation's service providers in supported employment.

This method of operation was highly time-consuming and intense. Some of the issues such as long-term funding create a myriad of problems which are not easily resolved by one or two recommendations. In other cases, vocational integration, for example, definition of the scope of the issue was in itself a major problem.

The Forum began with the moderators of the five groups each providing approximately a 20-minute overview presentation of the topic which their group was responsible for discussing. These presentations helped crystalize for the Forum participants the issues each individual group was going to analyze. At the conclusion of these presentations, the five teams then met during working sessions over the next 24 hours. These meetings culminated in a short summary presentation of each group's discussion and copy of each group's working notes stored on computer discs. The edited copy of the five groups is what this document holds.

We believe that the material in this monograph provides for a blueprint of expanded supported employment implementation and for improvement in service delivery practices and issues. Great strides have been made within the past five years in developing supported employment programs, but much more remains to be done. Some of the issues are systemic problems which can only be resolved legislatively; others can be resolved through training and technical assistance; yet others will need the development of new knowledge through more research and demonstration. It is the collective hope of the Forum participants that this document be used to help create a greater understanding of what needs to happen for supported employment opportunities to be made available to more persons with severe disabilities.

Paul Wehman, Ph.D.
Director
Rehabilitation Research & Training Center
Virginia Commonwealth University

Issues Forum: Mission and Development

Susan Griffin
Virginia Commonwealth University

Michael Barcus
Virginia Commonwealth University

Issues Forum: Mission and Development

The Williamsburg Issues Forum, held in May, 1988, took place as a part of the Employment Network Project, University of Oregon. The University of Oregon's Employment Network Project is a 24-month project co-funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research and the Rehabilitation Services Administration. This project is designed to provide technical assistance and training institutes in supported employment. The approach of the project for the provision of specific technical assistance is built upon a national network of consultants with skills and knowledge in various aspects of supported employment. The provision of short-term institutes is built upon a collaborative effort of nationally known training groups. The collaborative group includes: the Department of Special Education at the University of Northern Iowa, the Department of Special Education at the University of Vermont; the Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation, Boston University; the University of San Francisco Rehabilitation Administration; the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU-RRTC); and the University of Oregon.

The provision of any quality training, technical assistance, or program implementation hinges on an overall awareness of the critical issues related to supported employment. This assumption prompted the VCU-RRTC to include the development and provision of a two-day conference as a part of their role in the overall project.

Initial Forum Development

Initial consultation for the design of the conference naturally occurred with the Employment Network collaborative group. The diverse relationships of the group with supported employment providers enhanced the ability of the RRTC planning team to generate a preliminary format and content outline for the conference. Based on experiences with various providers, the majority of the sub-contractors proposed that participants would benefit more from meeting with other leaders in the field of supported employment to discuss implementation issues rather than listening to presentations on supported employment topics. Since a structured "discussion" type meeting is very different from a conference style gathering, it was proposed that the meeting should be called an "Issues Forum".

In addition to proposing a potential meeting format, the Employment Network group also gave input on issues that state projects have identified as troublesome, such as: long-term funding, facility conversion, strategies for in-state technical assistance and training, economic development, community supports, integration, policy change within states, and consumer empowerment.

Once tentative topical areas and format had been discussed, a target group of participants was compiled. Table 1 shows a breakdown of the target audience. A limited number of people were targeted for initial input on the meeting format and content, and also for eventual participation in the Forum.

The RRTC planning team determined the next step in the development of the "Issues Forum" should be input from the target audience regarding their preferences in format, content, and presenters or moderators. The invitation for comment and participation sent to the target audience delineated in Table 1 was accompanied by two forms, one asking which topical areas were most important if they could choose five, and another asking

Table 1

Breakdown of Target Audience

27 OSERS-funded state supported employment projects	Three participants each
4 active Title VI-C states	Three participants each
5 advocacy groups . National Association of Rehabilitation Facilities (NARF) . People First . United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) . Council of State Administrators in Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR)	Two participants each
4 nationally recognized supported employment providers	One participant each
23 individual leaders . Academicians . Federal level representatives . RSA Commissioners . Researchers . Trainers . State level representatives	One participant each

which of the proposed meeting formats met the participants needs more completely.

From the 63 invitations for comments mailed, we received 34 responses. Of these responses, most individuals provided the planning team with comments on format, issues, and potential speakers. Table 2 summarizes the major findings from the mailing.

Based on the information received, the revised "mission" of the "Issues Forum: Future Directions for Supported Employment" was to have small groups of experienced supported employment implementors/advocates from across the nation examine the scope of issues within five specific topical areas, to delineate past/current practices and resources that have been or could be available for the betterment of supported employment, and to identify programmatic challenges with each issue that currently faces implementors of supported employment.

Facilitation of Discussion

The planning team reviewed several types of discussion or group facilitation methods and decided that a modified Force-field Analysis approach would be the most effective method of structuring group discussion. Essentially, each working group would be responsible for: 1) discussion of the critical elements of two or three issues from the topical area, 2) identification of progress and current resources within each issue, and 3) identification of challenges and work still to be done for each issue.

Once this process was identified, the planning team at the RRTC refined it through several "trial runs". The final process is outlined in Table 3.

Moderating/Facilitating the Working Groups

The type of group facilitation outlined above is not simple to implement. Once a decision was made to use this process, the planning team

Table 2

Questionnaire Findings

- Five issues, if collapsed, were of prime importance:
    1) long-term funding
    2) systems change/conversion
    3) empowerment/integration
    4) technical assistance/staff development
    5) in-state economic development and marketing
- Conversation between experienced implementors of supported employment was more important than information imparted through speakers/sessions.
- An unbiased environment where all participants would feel secure in sharing problems/potential strategies was critical.
- Issues should be discussed in small (10-15 people) working groups led by a moderator.
- Each group should use the same format and present their findings on day 2.
- A short panel session should be used to set the stage for working groups.

Table 3

Working Group Issues Discussion Process

BEFORE LUNCH (10:45 - 11:30 a.m.)

Moderator leads group in a brief discussion of trends and issues within topical area.

Group brainstorms several issues to be discussed.

Group ranks issues and prepares to discuss the top three (3).

AFTER LUNCH (1:00 - 5:00 p.m.)

Group identifies the major elements within the top rated issue (issue 1).

Group identifies and delineates the progress/resources related to issue 1.

Group identifies the challenges/work to be done related to issue 1.

Group repeats this 1 hour process for the second and third ranked issues (3rd issue is optional, if group has time).

Group de-briefs and sets up guidelines for second-day presentation.

decided that it would have to be implemented with two group leaders. One leader would be responsible for organizing group discussion through the process outlined above, and thus "moderate" the discussion. The other leader (facilitator) would be responsible for recording the group discussion, making sure that the group stayed on-task, and assisting the moderator. For the role of moderator, the planning team selected from national leaders in supported employment who were recommended by the proposed audience. It is important to note that state project directors were not selected as moderators to insure that they could participate fully as group members.

Facilitators were chosen from the RRTC staff. The rationale for this decision was two-fold: first, RRTC staff would be readily available to practice and learn the facilitation process, and second, RRTC staff would be readily available to take the lead in preparing the proceedings document.

Finalized Plans for the Forum

Once the agenda (see Table 4) and working group facilitation process (see Table 3) were finalized, two final mailings were sent to the potential participants. The first mailing requested formal registration and limited the total forum size to 100. State projects were limited to three participants, whereas specialized groups and provider agencies were limited to one participant. The second mailing confirmed registration and familiarized each participant with the working group process.

During the last month and a half before the Forum, the moderator and facilitator pairs were asked to communicate with one another to insure coordination once they were in the actual working group. In addition, each moderator was asked to prepare a short presentation for the opening panel to acquaint the Forum participants with their topical area. The moderator and

Table 4

Issues Forum: Future Directions for Supported Employment

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Wednesday, May 11		
6:30 - 8:00 p.m.	PACERS reception. All Forum participants invited to attend. Speakers: Patti Smith - OSERS; and Sue Sutter - RSA	
Thursday, May 12		
9:00 - 10:30 a.m.	Opening Session: Working Group Moderators will collectively present major issues and purpose of forum. Panel Moderator: Dr. Paul Wehman, Director, RRTC	Amphitheater
10:30 - 10:45 a.m.	BREAK	Lounge D
10:45 - 11:30 a.m.	Break into working groups. Each group will identify major issues in topic area	
11:30 - 1:00 p.m.	LUNCH on own (Refer to Restaurant Listing)	
1:00 - 1:45 p.m.	Working groups continue. Further discussion of issues	
1:45 - 2:00 p.m.	BREAK	
2:00 - 5:00 p.m.	Working groups continue	
5:00 - 6:30 p.m.	Social Gathering	Poolside (President's Hall if raining)
Friday, May 13		
8:30 - 10:00 a.m.	Participants have the choice of three activities: putting together final presentation, talking with Employment Network Sub-Contractors, or holding individual meetings with other participants.	
10:00 - 10:15 a.m.	BREAK	Lounge D
10:15 - 11:45 a.m.	Presentations from two (2) working groups	
11:45 - 1:00 p.m.	LUNCH on own	
1:00 - 3:00 p.m.	Presentations from three (3) working groups	
3:00 - 3:30 p.m.	Concluding Remarks and discussion of Proceedings Manual. Speaker: Dr. David Mank, Director, The Employment Network	Amphitheater

This is an RRTC - Employment Network Sponsored Event

Virginia Commonwealth University is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action University facilitator pairs were also asked to be prepared to do a half-hour summary presentation at the close of the Forum to present their group's discussion.

The result of the multi-faceted discussions that occurred at the May Issues Forum are detailed in this monograph. Prior to the actual printing of this monograph, participants of each working group were sent draft copies of the chapter from their session for comments and edits. Therefore, the information contained in each chapter can be viewed as a recording of the discussion and results of each work group.

Systems Change/Conversion

John Kregel
Virginia Commonwealth University

Rebecca McDonald
ARC of Union County, New Jersey

Systems Change/Conversion

Working Group

Moderator: Rebecca McDonald, New Jersey ARC

Facilitator: John Kregel, VCU-RRTC

Working Group Participants:

Richard Bell	Illinois Governor's Planning Council
Walter A. Chernish	Louise W. Eggleston Center
Rebecca Cook	Oklahoma Rehabilitation Services, Supported Employment Project
Ricki Cook	North Carolina Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Supported Employment Project
Gary Donaldson	Kennedy Institute, Maryland Supported Employment Project
Frank Greensburg	Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
Sharman Davis Jamison	Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights (PACER) Center, Minneapolis
Marla Ludwig	North Dakota Supported Employment Project
Sharon Miller	Montana Vocational Rehabilitation
W. Grant Revell, Jr.	Virginia Department of Rehabilitation Services, Supported Employment Project
Richard Robinson	University of San Francisco
Don St. Louis	Rocky Mountain Resource and Training Institute
Bob Robertson	Indiana Governor's Planning Council
Walter Sullivan	Delaware Supported Employment Project
Renee Tennant	Wisconsin Vocational Rehabilitation
Roger Webb	Texas Rehabilitation Commission
Charles Hopkins	Georgia Division of Developmental Disabilities
Joan Kandler	Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights (PACER) Center, Minneapolis

Systems Change/Conversion

Tremendous gains have been achieved in the employment of citizens with the most severe developmental disabilities. Even so, no state has an operational long-range plan to downsize and phase out existing facility-based programs and reallocate existing funds to supported employment services. Likewise, very few states have concrete plans to limit future expansion of adult vocational services for people with severe disabilities exclusively to supported employment services. While supported employment programs have emerged in hundreds of communities in every state in the nation, there is a risk that supported employment is and will be viewed as an opportunity to expand existing services. Conversion of existing services (i.e., closing segregated programs and establishing integrated programs) has yet to occur on a large scale.

If supported employment is to become an available option for persons with severe disabilities, then conversion of the existing system must be addressed. The systems change/conversion working group attempted to address the underlying reasons behind the present situation. What are the barriers that inhibit our nation from replacing congregate, segregated programs with services that meet individual employment needs and preferences through a variety of supports? How can we develop consensus on what community-based employment services should look like, and how can we implement the necessary systems change to create this new vision for the future?

The working group was comprised of individuals with diverse backgrounds and areas of expertise. A number of members were either directors or staff members of the 27 Title III state systems change projects. Other members represented rehabilitation facilities, state rehabilitation agencies, state developmental disabilities planning councils, and universities involved in inservice and preservice training. Parents of individuals with disabilities and parent trainers were also represented in the group. This diversity promoted an interchange of ideas from a wide variety of perspectives.

As its starting point, the group agreed on a working definition of conversion. Conversion is the replacement of congregate, segregated service programs with services that meet individual employment needs and preferences through a variety of supports. It is important to note that at no time did the group focus its discussions on whether conversion should occur. The group formed an immediate consensus that large-scale conversion was a desirable goal, and discussion focused exclusively on how conversion could be promoted by federal, state, and local agencies and advocacy groups.

Identification of Major Issues in Systems Change/Conversion

The morning session consisted of brainstorming and discussion of issues pertaining to systems change/conversion. Participants attempted to generate a lengthy list of potential issues, while sharing personal perspectives with other group members. An initial list of over 40 potential issues were identified. At the risk of over-simplifying a lengthy and complex discussion, a listing of the central issues is provided below. These issues are: attitudes, beliefs, and values; consumer empowerment; involvement of key players; relationship to the business community; funding; role of the state agencies; need for improved service technologies; and staff roles.

Attitudes, beliefs, and values. Many of the initial comments focused on the attitudes and values toward conversion held by individuals in administering agencies, local program staff, caregivers, and consumers themselves. Several group members suggested that apparently negative attitudes toward conversion expressed by direct service providers and caregivers may actually be expressions of fear and concern. Caregivers have deep concerns about the stability of the supported employment initiative; service providers are often fearful of the effect conversion will have on their job security. It was felt that negative attitudes frequently may be an expression of uncertainty regarding the future implications of a converted service system.

Several participants also addressed comments toward the attitudes of state and local agency personnel. It was felt that negative attitudes toward conversion might be the result of a lack of information, an attempt to protect resources for existing programs, and/or the perceived difficulty of managing a decentralized, community-based service system.

Consumer empowerment. The role of consumers in planning and implementing systems change was an important subject for participants. A major theme developed that service systems should be consumer-driven. This term embodies several different concepts. First, it means that consumers should be provided a variety of options from which to select and then be empowered to choose their own employment alternatives. Second, rather than attempting to fit each consumer into a rigid service system, it was felt that a flexible system of supports should be available to meet the individual needs of each consumer. Also implicit in the concept is the need to address the lengthy waiting lists for services in many states, a reliance on a "zero exclusion" policy to insure the participation of individuals with the most severe disabilities, and an emphasis on consumer satisfaction and consumer employment outcomes as the key indicators to be used to evaluate program success.

Involvement of all "key players". The group quickly recognized that systems change is a complex, dynamic process that will require the commitment and support of many different individuals if it is to occur in a meaningful way. It was repeatedly emphasized that various individuals would be far more supportive of conversion activities if they were involved in the initial planning of these activities. Consumers, their families, direct service staff, local program administrators, other human services staff (e.g., rehabilitation counselors, case managers, residential program staff, etc.), boards of directors and advisory committees, state agency personnel, and advocacy groups were among the "key players" repeatedly mentioned that must be involved for successful change in current systems.

Relationship to the business community. Another major point made several times during the morning discussion was that a commitment to systems change would require provider agencies to reassess and develop new relationships with their local business community. The need to reexamine the value of services provided by local supported employment programs in light of changing economic conditions, methods of marketing new services to employers, and the inclusion of employers in program development and marketing activities were all discussed. Related to this is the need to consider the local economic conditions, such as high unemployment rates, rural economies, and other factors on the design of future service programs.

Funding. Accessing the necessary resources to convert existing day programs was discussed at length. While several group members felt that supplemental funding would be required to assist local programs in the conversion process, there was also an acknowledgement that substantial funds are currently available in the service system to accommodate a large amount of program conversion, if those funds could be identified and reallocated for supported employment programs. At the same time, the consensus was that conversion of existing programs is clearly a different issue than that of increasing system capacity. Any savings generated by a conversion to community-based employment should not be expected to solve waiting list problems. The group also noted the need to solidify both the time-limited and ongoing support components of the supported employment funding stream in order to establish a firm long-term funding base to guarantee the stability of a converted service system.

Role of the state agency. Many potential issues addressed the role of state agencies in the conversion process. The necessity for states to develop a clear conversion policy and concrete conversion plans was identified as a top priority. Also discussed were strategies states might employ to facilitate conversion at the local level, the role of the state in monitoring and evaluating employment programs, and the need for improved interagency cooperation.

Need for improved service technologies. While the present service technology allows for the development of community-based employment programs to accommodate the needs of individuals presently participating in segregated programs, the group cautioned against "institutionalizing" the new service delivery models. It was felt that conversion might best be promoted by encouraging experimentation with a wide variety of service approaches. New approaches to program structure and management, new methods of direct service provision, new strategies for fostering integration in the workplace, and incorporating new tools such as non-aversive behavior management and rehabilitation technology will likely be needed to insure the success of a converted service system.

Staff roles. A great deal of discussion was devoted to issues pertaining to the effects of conversion upon the roles of direct service staff and local program managers. These include the availability of adequate numbers of trained staff to implement supported employment, the willingness of current day program and workshop personnel to assume new roles in a community-based employment program, and the need to develop effective inservice training programs were crucial issues related to the role of direct service personnel. Major roles for state program managers are assisting local program managers to develop local conversion plans, managing decentralized community-based service systems, and managing the conversion process.

Prioritizing Major Systems Change Conversion Issues

After generating the list of potential issues, the working group then focused on the task of identifying and prioritizing three to five major issues for subsequent in-depth discussion. The group believed that it was important to: 1) develop a list of major issues that encompasses as many of the concerns expressed in the initial discussion as possible and 2) develop a list that would provide a sound, logical basis for future planning and recommendations. The three identified issues were vision, resources, and process. Issues statements for each are provided below:

1. Vision - An inclusionary, innovative, and adaptive shared future image of adult employment services needs to be developed at the federal, state, and local levels.
2. Resources - At the federal, state, and local levels develop systems that promote privatization, competition, and consumer-driven services through reallocation of personnel and fiscal resources.
3. Process - At the federal, state, and local levels develop clear-cut plans, both strategic and transitional, for replacing congregate, segregated programs with services that meet individual employment needs and preferences through a variety of supports leading to:
    a. Commitments
    b. Timelines
    c. Funding Priorities
    d. Results

These three issues served as the basis for discussion throughout the remainder of the Forum. Group members generally believed that the majority of the 40 issues in the initial list could be incorporated as major elements under one or more of the issues. It was also felt that classifying the issues in this manner provided a clear, logical blueprint to guide strategic planning and promote concrete recommendations. The remainder of the first day's working sessions were devoted to more fully elaborating upon the three major issues. For each issue, major elements are identified. Next, resources available to address the issue and progress that have been made to date are presented. Finally, major challenges and work that remains to be done to overcome the issue are discussed.

Issue #1 - Vision

A consensus emerged that the single issue that is the greatest barrier to the development of a comprehensive systems change program is the lack of a clear picture of what a comprehensive supported employment system should look like. Fears still exist that perhaps supported employment is just another passing fad and not a permanent, long-term reality. At the heart of the current controversy lies a lack of consensus regarding the rights of citizens with disabilities to full participation in their communities. An additional, very tangible concern on the part of service providers relates to their ability to compete in the business world. Supporting adults with developmental disabilities in employment takes service providers out of environments in which they feel comfortable, and will require the development of new and innovative approaches.

Elements

Seven major elements of the definition of conversion were identified. These elements are listed in Table 1. The group felt that a shared vision of what quality services will look like in the future was needed. This vision should: 1) meet the needs and desires of a wide spectrum of

Table 1

Vision - Elements

1. Develop a shared vision of what quality services will look like in the future.

2. Base a vision of future employment services on the principles of consumer satisfaction and choice.

3. Maximize the range of alternative options available in the service system and maximize consumer choice.

4. Develop a vision of future services that can be shared across all service systems and by all service providers.

5. Create supported employment services that are a stable, permanent entity that consumers and their families can rely upon.

6. Create a clear picture of what the future service system will look like from the perspective of consumers, families, managers, and direct service staff.

7. Recognize that people's lives outside employment are important.

individuals through a varied array of services, 2) identify the types of supports to be available and the critical outcomes to be generated by these supports, and 3) identify the types of employment options that would be available within a future service system. Another related need is to insure and project an image that the supported employment service system is a stable, permanent entity that consumers and their families can rely upon to be available over their lifetimes and is made up of agencies and corporations that insure long-term stability of resources.

A number of elements related to the principle of consumer empowerment. The group felt that a need exists to develop a vision of future employment services that is based upon the principles of consumer satisfaction and choice and empowers the individuals that experience the consequences of the services. A quality service system should maximize the range of alternative options available, provide optimal consumer choice, allow individuals to make a self-supporting wage in order to foster independence, and focuses on careers for individuals with disabilities rather than jobs only. Finally, several members felt strongly that the community-based service system of the future should recognize and emphasize the importance of all facets of people's lives, including those outside the workplace.

Additional elements of the vision issue focused on the role of state and local agencies in the conversion process. A need exists to clarify and prioritize our values and outcomes to develop a vision of future services that can be shared across all service systems (Vocational Rehabilitation, Developmental Disabilities, Education, etc.) and is flexible enough to accommodate change over time. Also important is the need to delineate what the future service system will look like from the perspective of consumers, families, managers, and direct service staff. For example, what will direct service staff really be doing on a day to day basis in the future? How will the responsibilities of family members change within a community-based service system?

Progress/Resources

Several factors presently exist that may facilitate the development of a clear vision. These factors are listed in Table 2. First, it was agreed that parents are beginning to demand supported employment services. Coupled with the emergence of self-advocacy organizations, this holds the promise of making service systems in the future more accountable and more responsive to the needs and choices of consumers and their families.

Second, the inclusion of supported employment in the rehabilitation system through the reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act and the inclusion of supported employment in legislation in many states will help address the stability and permanence of supported employment. In addition, there have been exemplary single agency demonstrations of conversion. These successes, coupled with the success of present expansion activities and the emergence in a few states of plans to downsize existing segregated programs represent substantial progress. Finally, the group felt that the intensity of the controvery surrounding conversion suggests that conversion is a highly important issue.

Challenges

A number of significant challenges to conversion were identified and are presented in Table 3. The group expressed skepticism that all needed technologies are presently available to effectively operate a totally converted service system. A discrepancy exists between a vision of a converted system and current technology and resources. The group cautioned that the field should not decide upon a single vision of future services too

Table 2

Vision - Resources/Progress

1. Intensity of the controversy means that conversion is being actively debated and addressed across the country.
2. Exemplary demonstrations of conversion exist in various communities throughout the nation.
3. Parents are becoming better informed and demanding supported employment services.
4. Emergence of the self-advocacy movement supports integrated employment.
5. Inclusion of supported employment in federal and state legislation offers some stability.
6. Success of present expansion activities demonstrates the success of community-based employment services.
7. Instances of conversion exist in some state agencies already.

Table 3

Vision - Challenges

1. To develop trust, confidence, and belief in others involved in the conversion process.

2. To overcome the lack of creativity and the burden of past experience which often hinder the initiation of change.

3. To close the gap which exists between what we believe a converted system should look like and what we currently have the resources and technology to provide.

4. To avoid premature institutionalization of supported employment models and services.

5. To keep supported employment conversion in balance with the ongoing day to day operation of the agency.

6. To form coalitions and teams -- no one agency can do it all.

quickly and that premature institutionalization of models and services should be avoided.

Other challenges are related to the difficulty of managing programs during the conversion process. Local program managers will be challenged to balance ongoing day to day operations of the agency while simultaneously managing the conversion to supported employment. Service providers must develop skills in strategic thinking and change management as their roles evolve from service program directors to entrepreneurs.

Issue #2 - Resources

Any discussion of conversion will revolve around the deployment of resources. Supported employment should not always require new sources of funding and only be considered separate from existing services. This approach will not promote systems change and will create parallel and competing systems. A holistic approach to funding, including the reallocation of existing resources, is required. Responding to consumer preferences, private sector criteria, and economic marketplace dynamics will reshape the very nature of the service systems of the future.

Elements

A number of key elements of the resources issue were identified and are summarized in Table 4. It was emphasized that meaningful systems change would require not only additional funds to serve individuals not presently in the system, but also a significant reallocation of personnel and fiscal resources. Many of the elements will focus at the very heart of our existing service system by promoting the concepts of privatization, competition, and consumer-driven services.

A major element discussed several times during the course of the working sessions was the need to access monies already available in the

Table 4

Resources - Elements

1. Define new staff roles, refocus existing facility-based positions, and develop a cadre of competent supported employment direct service personnel.
2. Establish uniform methodologies for determining the costs of supported employment services.
3. Access monies already in the current system and reallocate those funds based on the needs of individuals, not programs.
4. View employers and business community as a source of funding and support.
5. Capitalize on the "American work ethic," the value that individuals in our society who can work, should work.

current service system. Vocational rehabilitation, developmental disabilities, state mental health and mental retardation, Job Training Partnership Act, and Medicaid waiver programs are all potential funding sources that currently direct large amounts of monies to support programs that achieve individual consumer outcomes in congregate, segregated facilities. Rather than assuming that a large-scale conversion to supported employment programs would automatically require a huge influx of new funds, every effort should be made to maximize the effectiveness of current resources by reallocating existing monies into services that would meet the needs of individuals rather than perpetuate ineffective programs.

While reallocating existing resources should be a major priority, several group members cautioned that at the present time industrial revenue is currently used to subsidize supported employment funding in many facilities. These members were concerned that present resources may not be able to cover all the costs of quality supported employment programs over time. An important theme which emerged at this point was the need to turn to the private sector as a source of direct funding and resources for community-based employment programs. This theme will be expanded upon in the section below dealing with progress and resources.

Complicating the question of whether an adequate funding base presently exists for system-wide community-based employment programs is the present lack of accurate information regarding the true costs of operating supported employment programs. Uniform methodologies should be developed to accurately determine the real costs of operating community-based employment programs in comparison to the costs of maintaining the current service system. While fairly accurate data appears to exist to some degree at the local level, multiple funding streams and multiple approaches to computing program costs make large-scale cost comparisons extremely difficult. The development of uniform procedures to determine true program costs was viewed as a major element that should be addressed immediately at the federal and state levels.

Discussion on this issue focused not only on fiscal resources, but on the identification and reallocation of existing personnel resources as well. It is recognized that a major restructuring of staff roles and responsibilities will occur as a result of large-scale conversion. New staff roles and new positions will emerge in ever increasing numbers. Many roles currently defined in facility-based programs will no longer be required, resulting in tremendous professional and personal readjustments. In addition, serious doubts were expressed as to whether an adequate number of competent supported employment direct service and managerial personnel can be trained to meet the demands of the reshaped service system.

Progress and Resources

Substantial progress has been made to date in the area of reallocating personnel and fiscal resources. These factors are summarized in Table 5. As noted previously, the emergence of a new generation of parents, the growing self-advocacy movement, and the involvement of business persons sensitive to individuals with disabilities are a major resource which can be used to foster the conversion of existing facility-based programs.

Group members were also aware of a large number of innovative strategies that have proven successful in various localities throughout the nation for using new sources of funds to support community-based employment programs. Many of these strategies focused on privatization of services, such as utilizing current tax incentives for employers and allowing employers to bypass certain bidding requirements when they commit to an

Table 5

Resources - Progress

1. Innovative strategies have been demonstrated that promote the privatization of services.

2. A new generation of parents, the growing support from self-advocacy organizations, and business persons sensitive to individuals with disabilities have emerged.

3. An array of strategies have been developed that state agencies can use to provide incentive for facility conversion, including:

    a. Start-up grants
    b. Block grant funding as opposed to unit cost funding
    c. Allowing agencies to keep surplus funds or recycle unused funds
    d. Using a bonus system tied to outcomes
    e. Social Security demonstration projects
    f. Medicaid Waiver monies for agency utilization
    g. Using VI-C monies to leverage long-term funds already in existence

integrated workforce. Other strategies focused on providing seed money for economic development to encourage the establishment of integrated businesses, providing expanding support staff roles within host companies, and facilitating corporate job development.

Flexible state funding incentives have been proposed or implemented in various locations throughout the country to encourage facility conversion. Included are such strategies as: special one time only funds to cover the costs of conversion; experimentation with block grant funding approaches as an alternative to unit cost funding; mechanisms to allow agencies to keep surplus funds or to recycle unused funds; funding patterns based upon the consumer outcomes generated by employment programs, either by establishing funding formulas based on outcomes or developing a bonus system tied to employment outcomes; participation in Social Security Demonstration Project and accessing Title XIX monies for agency utilization; and creative uses of Title VI-C monies to leverage long-term funding sources already in existence.

A final point made during the discussion related to the impact of litigation upon supported employment funding. Several states are currently under court order to deinstitutionalize large state residential facilities for individuals with mental retardation and other developmental disabilities. Far from hindering the development of community-based employment programs, it was felt that litigation in many instances may provide an opportunity for change. Litigation had focused the attention of the need to promote integrated community services for individuals with truly severe disabilities.

Challenges

Challenges to accessing sufficient funds for total systems change are summarized in Table 6. The majority of these focus on the lack of flexibility in present funding streams and the need to address the major task of inservice and preservice training required to staff a converted service system.

Increased flexibility is needed in state funding patterns, including the development of new options for funding ongoing support services, mechanisms for funding individual costs as opposed to block funding, and procedures specifically designed to deal with the constraints imposed on individuals living in Medicaid funded Community Living Arrangements (CLAs) that remove incentives for individuals to work. Also cited were the need to establish a reliable funding stream with which to support rehabilitation technology and industrial engineering activities, and methods for encouraging the educational system to provide community-based instructional experiences prior to graduation.

An array of staff training issues must be resolved, including leadership training, inservice and preservice training (including the role of the community college network). Insufficient resources are presently allocated for training. Finally, attracting and keeping qualified staff who possess an understanding of business environments needs attention.

Other major challenges identified by the group include the need to identify effective methods of educating legislators regarding the issues surrounding the funding of supported employment programs, strategies for effectively accessing the public sector job market, and procedures designed to resolve the "unfair competition issue" with the private sector.

Table 6

Resources - Challenges

1. To develop greater flexibility in state funding patterns.
2. To resolve an array of staff training issues, including leadership training, insufficient resources for training, and the difficulty in attracting and keeping staff who possess an understanding of the business environment.
3. To access funds to support rehabilitation engineering and industrial technology.
4. To identify methods for accessing the public sector job market.
5. To identify methods for encouraging the educational system to provide community-based instructional experiences prior to graduation.
6. To identify effective methods to educate legislators.
7. To resolve the "unfair competition issue" with the private sector.

Issue # 3 - Process

Systems change is the result of a dynamic planning process resulting from strong leadership and a team approach to problem solving. Planning is useless unless it results in specific outcomes and clear-cut strategies to achieve those outcomes. Systems change requires ownership by all involved stakeholders and constituents and a mechanism for supporting them during the change process. A crucial issue in designing plans for systems change is to balance ongoing needs with future goals in terms of supporting consumers, their families, and program staff during the conversion process. This will require a strong sense of commitment and a willingness to take risks on the part of the of the leadership.

Elements

The major elements of the process issue identified by the group are contained in Table 7. These elements focus upon the nature of the conversion plan, the role of the state agency in the planning process, and the need to provide support and assistance to facility directors throughout the conversion process.

There was a general consensus that state agencies have not taken an adequate leadership role in the development of facility conversion plans. It was strongly felt that state agency policies and regulations must be established that mandate and encourage conversion rather than simply permit it. Formal statewide conversion plans must be developed that 1) involve consumers and their caregivers in the initial plan design and promote their opportunity for choice and 2) are designed with initial input from facility directors. Furthermore, it was felt that state agencies should examine their current practices and refrain from funding services that do not result in integrated employment opportunities.

Table 7

Process - Elements

1. Develop formal state plans for conversion.
2. Develop consumer driven plans and involve consumers and their caregivers in the initial plan design.
3. Involve facility directors in initial plan design.
4. Continue to develop exemplary demonstrations of local facility conversion that document the costs of conversion and the value of supported employment services to the public and private sector.
5. Develop a core team of trainers that specifically focus on assisting agencies to convert.
6. Provide intermediaries that will support facility directors during the conversion process -- actually going on-site and assisting in the development of plans based on local conditions.
7. Persuade funding sources to stop supporting services that do not result in integrated employment.

While the success of a variety of supported employment service delivery models has been widely documented, additional demonstration efforts are needed to document the feasibility of total conversion of facility-based programs. The purpose of these demonstrations should be to document the true costs of conversion as well as demonstrate the value of major systems change alternatives to both the public and private sector.

It is clear that facility directors will play a crucial role in the development of local conversion plans. The group felt that a comprehensive array of support services should be made available to local facility directors involved in the conversion process. Appropriate supports should include the development of a core team of trainers that focus specifically on assisting local agencies to convert, the development of demonstration sites to train facility directors in the conversion process, and the development of conversion support networks to allow communication and information exchange. Another possible approach involves the identification of intermediaries at the state level who could work at the community level, assisting in the development of plans based upon local dynamics and economic conditions.

Resources and Progress

While planning effective conversion is a complex and difficult task, several resources presently exist that can aid in the conversion process. These resources are summarized in Table 8.

A positive climate exists at the present time that makes conversion appear to be a viable, attractive employment alternative. A general atmosphere of reexamination and change is present in all of business and industry. Consumer demand for supported employment services is increasing and numerous media representations of individuals with severe disabilities

Table 8

Process - Resources

1. An atmosphere of reexamination and change is present in business and industry
2. Large amounts of resources presently support segregated employment programs that could be redirected into integrated employment.
3. Consumer demand for supported employment services is growing.
4. A network of people experienced in conversion presently exists, particularly in the 27 state systems change projects.
5. Voucher/vendorship as a way for consumers to choose services that most meet their personal preferences.
6. Positive relationship of many programs to unions, including using unions for supported employment services.

successfully maintaining integrated employment are now available and being disseminated throughout the country.

Another positive factor cited by the participants is the large amount of personnel and financial resources that exist within the present facility-based service system. Large numbers of committed personnel and huge amounts of fiscal resources are going into segregated employment that could be redirected into community based programs. These resources, coupled with the expertise found in the 27 federally funded systems change projects can have a major role in effective conversion planning.

Other resources include initial demonstrations of voucher/vendorship programs as a method for enabling consumers to choose the services that most effectively address their employment preferences and the possibility that labor unions may play a positive role in the delivery of supported employment services.

Challenges

While significant resources are in place to promote the large-scale systems change process, the working group identified numerous challenges yet to be overcome. These challenges, listed in Table 9, focused on issues pertaining to waiting lists for adult employment services, effective methods to deal with the large financial investment that has already been made in facility-based programs, and the need to insure uniform program quality and the creation of a "safety net" for individuals temporarily out of work.

Efforts should not be focused exclusively on reallocating monies to serve individuals already in the service system, but should also take into account those individuals not in the system at the present time, specifically consumers presently facing lengthy waits for services. Local agencies should maintain complete information on individuals on waiting

Table 9

Process - Challenges

1. To devise a strategy to convince state agencies to no longer support services that do not result in integrated employment.

2. To include individuals currently on waiting lists when planning for future services, particularly historically unserved populations.

3. To obtain information on individuals presently on waiting lists to project the costs of serving these persons in integrated employment programs.

4. To create a "safety net" to allay parental fears and to absorb people temporarily out of work.

5. To devise effective monitoring strategies to insure that persons will not be excluded from supported employment based upon functioning level.

6. To develop procedures that will achieve a standard level of program quality, insuring equity across areas/sectors of a state.

lists, and evaluate those individuals for appropriate services. Special efforts should be made to include historically unserved populations in the service system and not to exclude individuals from supported employment based on functioning level. Methods are required that will accurately project the costs of serving individuals on waiting lists, and this information should repeatedly be made available to legislators and policy-makers.

Much work remains to be done to gain a consensus at the state agency level that will insure that precious resources are not longer used to fund programs that do not lead to integrated employment. In addition, the creation of a "safety net" in the conversion planning process is required to allay the fears of caregivers and to absorb consumers temporarily out of work during and after the conversion to community-based services. A final significant challenge is the development of strategies to achieve a standard level of program quality that will insure equal opportunity across all areas and sectors of a state.

Summary

It may be useful to point out "themes" that synthesize several of the key points repeatedly made by group members. First, it is clear that the vision of a future service system is that of a consumer-driven service system. Consumer choice and consumer involvement in the planning and evaluation of services should be the focal point of any effort to redesign or convert existing facility-based services. Group members repeatedly stated their beliefs that "token involvement" by individuals with disabilities was not acceptable. A quality service system should be responsive to the needs and desires expressed by individuals and their families.

Second, conversion is a complex issue that affects and requires the active commitment of large numbers of individuals. Individuals with disabilities, their families, direct service providers, program managers, board members, advocacy groups, state agency officials, legislators, and the business community must all be willing participants if meaningful systems change is to occur in more than a few isolated communities. At one level, conversion is a complex regulatory, managerial, and fiscal issue. At another level, however, conversion forces us to carefully look at our beliefs regarding the rights and opportunities we afford our citizens with disabilities and to critically examine the service system we have created to respond to their needs.

Third, the conversion of facility-based programs into community-based supported employment programs requires that we assess our existing relationships with the business community and significantly change major principles upon which the existing service system has been built. Privatization of services, revaluing services as an asset to local business and industry, funding programs based upon the consumer outcomes they generate, and encouraging active competition in the delivery of services represent a major change from traditional approaches emphasizing work adjustment training, pre-employment training, and day activity. These changes will require both a philosophical commitment to a new approach to service delivery and the development of new skills on the part of program managers and direct service staff members.

The systems change/conversion working group accomplished a great deal during its day long discussion. At times the feeling within the group was highly optimistic. It became clear that much has been done and much more could easily be accomplished to develop an integrated, community-based service system to meet the individual needs and preferences of consumers. At other times, the group seemed to be overwhelmed by the complexity and magnitude of the issues that lie before us. As difficult as the task may be, the commitment and resourcefulness of individuals attempting to promote the conversion of existing facility-based services indicates that we as a society may be on the verge of a revolutionary change in the design and delivery of employment services for persons with disabilities.

Integration and Empowerment in the Workplace

Michael Shafer

Virginia Commonwealth University

Jan Nisbet

University of New Hampshire

Integration and Empowerment

Working Group

Moderator: Jan Nisbet, University of New Hampshire

Facilitator: Michael Shafer, VCU-RRTC

Working Group Participants:

David Allen	Allegan Co. School District, Michigan
Michael Bornemann	Maryland Vocational Rehabilitation
Celie Boswell	Northern Rocky Mountain Easter Seal Society, Montana
David Brooks	Rehabilitation Administration and Management Programs, University of Oklahoma
Stan Butkis	Virginia Department of Mental Health/Mental Retardation/Substance Abuse Services
Michael Collins	University of Vermont
Karen Danley	Boston University
Neva Evenrud	Hit, Inc., North Dakota
Nancy Hitz	Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center, Alexandria, Virginia
Sid Larson	Oregon Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation
David Mank	University of Oregon
Brian McNulty	Colorado Department of Special Education
Larry Rhodes	University of Oregon
Lynda Richards	Temple University
Ron Trull	Texas Rehabilitation Commission
Catherine Urbain	Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights (PACER) Center, Minneapolis

Integration and Empowerment in the Workplace

What is integration? What is empowerment? How are these concepts related to one another? How do they conflict with one another? How do they manifest themselves in employment situations? How do we know when integration occurs? Are there qualitative differences in how well someone is integrated? If someone is truly empowered, may they then choose to remain segregated? Whose values are we operating from, anyhow?

These are but a few of the questions dealt with by the working group on empowerment and integration in the workplace. These and other questions were posed; many of them were left unanswered or only partially answered. A host of issues were identified, ranging from the role of the job coach in facilitating integration to definitional issues regarding both concepts to the effect which true empowerment has upon integration. Common themes were identified from these issues, allowing us to focus on the more salient issues.

Major Issues

One issue that was identified as most critical to this group was the relationship between integration and empowerment. While it is possible to talk about integration and empowerment separately (as we frequently found ourselves doing), it is not entirely logical to do so. Integration, the presence and active participation of persons in their communities, may occur without empowerment. Individuals regularly receive services over which they have little control, as in the case of an individual with mental retardation placed into a dishwashing job in spite of the fact that she prefers other types of jobs. Another example is the individual with mental illness who is placed into a position requiring a great deal of social contact even though the individual prefers to work by himself. People are regularly integrated without being empowered.

However important it is to address integration and empowerment within the same discussion, the working group found it extremely difficult to approach both of the topics simultaneously and with equal effort, especially within the time parameters of the Forum. Hence, the group agreed that further discussion would focus upon the relationship of integration and empowerment, but that secondary discussion would be limited primarily to the issue of integration. This decision made, the group identified two additional issues for discussion.

A second issue identified by the group was the process of defining integration in an adequate and useful manner, and the delineation of quality indicators of integration. Many in the working group expressed concern that while we each referred to integration in a general sense, no one had yet provided a definition of integration that was universally accepted, sensitive to the issue of empowerment and self-determination, and applicable to the work environments. One of the problems identified was the recognition that integration, as a concept, may be alternately viewed as a dimension of a given environment (e.g., a worksite providing contact with nondisabled coworkers) or as an outcome or experience realized by an individual (e.g., membership on the company's bowling team). Most definitions or discussions of the group tended to focus upon one or the other of these aspects without providing an adequate link between the two. As such, the group attempted to develop a working definition of integration that would be applicable to the workplace and sensitive to the interplay between environment and individual. A secondary activity was the development of a partial listing of the indicators or benchmarks identified to reflect quality integration.

A final issue that the group identified concerned the process of promoting integration and implications for the role and responsibilities of employment specialists. The process of promoting integration must begin with the establishment of the service organization, must permeate all aspects of that organization, and must be most clearly reflected in the manner in which service providers view their role. Having established that the mission of the organization and its employees is the support and empowerment of other individuals, the process of facilitating integration must also be evidenced in all activities that the organization pursues related to the delivery of supported employment services. The manner in which jobs are developed, for example, will ultimately affect the degree to which individuals become integrated in their jobs. So too, the manner in which employment specialists present themselves and supported employees will have a lasting impact upon the extent to which integration in the workplace is achieved. Hence, the process of facilitating integration represents a critical issue for further development.

The Relationship of Integration and Empowerment

The relationship between integration and empowerment can be highlighted by the following experience of a single mother and her adult son who was identified as mentally retarded. The mother was recently informed by the executive director for the sheltered workshop where her son was employed that her son was to be removed from the workshop and placed into a community job through supported employment. This young man had attended the sheltered workshop for some time, had developed a network of friends at the workshop, and was provided with activity and supervision during the day while his mother worked at her job.

The decision to place the young man into supported employment had been reached without the consent or input of the mother or her son. She did not fully support the decision because she did not have sufficient information about the new process of supported employment and because she was not provided with adequate assurances regarding the services and supports to be provided to her son. Following placement into a supported job, the young man worked at a job that he did not particularly enjoy (scrubbing pots) and felt lonesome, as he had little opportunity to see his old friends and he had not yet made many new friends at his new job.

A few months after the young man had been placed and trained in a community job and was no longer attending the sheltered workshop, his employer significantly reduced his work schedule. This alteration had a profound impact upon the young man and his mother as he now had nowhere to go for three hours each day except home. No one else was available to supervise the young man, he could not return to the workshop, and no other services or programs were available. As such, the mother was forced to rearrange her own working hours in order to assure that her son was adequately cared for. While it may be said that the young man was now presented in and to some extent participating in a more integrated worksite, it cannot be said that he was any more integrated into his community, nor was he any more empowered by his new job.

No doubt, anyone who has been involved with supporting persons in employment has experienced or has heard about similar situations. These situations are not unusual. In our quest to support individuals in integrated employment settings, we often do so while failing to insure that placement into an integrated job reflects the informed decision of the individual. To guard against such situations, it is imperative that empowerment and informed choice making be recognized as overriding goals that must drive human service providers and, in particular, those providing supported employment.

Empowerment is a hollow word, however, unless there is knowledge and information available to the empowered individual. Skeptics may argue that if we truly believe in empowerment, the employees of sheltered workshops are justified in demanding to stay in these settings (as has been true with other segregated services). Unfortunately, individuals with disabilities have had little opportunity to experience or become informed about any other possibilities. While individual choice and empowerment must be the ultimate outcomes of supported employment, they must be so within a context in which the individual possesses both alternatives and knowledge of all available alternatives.

What, then, is empowerment and how is it applied to the context of supported employment? Rappaport (1983) defines empowerment in the following way:

> Empowerment implies that many competencies are already present or at least possible.... Empowerment implies that what you see as poor functioning is a result of social structure and lack of resources which make it possible for the existing competencies to operate. It implies in those cases where new competencies need to be learned, they are best learned in a context of living life rather than in artificial programs where everyone, including the person learning, knows that it is the expert who is in charge. (p. 16)

As such, empowerment is a process by which individuals receiving services are in charge. They are in charge of deciding to be placed into supported employment, deciding to work as a stock clerk rather than a janitor, deciding to look for a new job because the current one doesn't pay well enough, deciding to get a new employment specialist, and deciding not to work in an integrated job. Such decisions can only be viewed as meaningful when the individual is informed of alternatives, has had reasonable exposure to alternatives, and is respected and recognized by service provider "experts" to be in charge.

As such, empowerment is developed and experienced as individuals gain exposure, experience, and opportunity to a variety of life situations previously unknown. Through such continued exposure and opportunity, empowerment may be manifested by the increased financial status of the individual, new skills that allow for alternative employment opportunities, new social relationships and networks, and an increasing ability to exert control over one's situation. Obviously, the tasks of integrating and empowering involve more than just the providers of supported employment.

If empowerment is to be achieved by individuals with significant disabilities, then the process of empowering must be part of the social service culture of this country. We cannot realistically hope that adults with disabilities can be readily empowered when they have had little opportunity, limited exposure, and dismal experiences during their formative years. Young adults leaving special education cannot be expected to make informed career decisions when their vocational experiences during school were restricted to horticulture and simulated workshop situations. Similarly, older adults cannot be expected to be empowered and informed in their decision making when they have but one vocational alternative available. Informed choice can only occur when individuals are provided with a wide array of alternatives from which individual free choice can be made.

Indicators of Integration

An essential problem faced by this working group was defining the term "integration". Although we all had a sense of what is conveyed by the term, no one could identify or articulate an operational definition which was universally acceptable. Hence, the group grappled throughout the Forum with defining integration, a process that was circuitously accomplished by identifying various indicators of integration.

As suggested in Table 1, a wealth of indicators of integration were identified. Some of the indicators reflect what may be referred to as capacity indicators while others reflect outcome indicators. Capacity indicators are environmental characteristics of the workplace which provide te opportunity or environmental capacity for integration to occur. For example, staff locker rooms, organized carpools, sports teams, and unionization represent opportunities for integration or provide the capacity for integration to occur. When these indicators are present in a given work setting, the opportunity for integration to occur is enhanced.

Outcome indicators, on the other hand, reflect the actual or realized level of integration that a particular worker realizes in her place of employment. For example, the frequency that a worker eats lunch with coworkers, the extent to which a worker is accepted by the rest of the workforce, and the extent to which tasks and work assignments are interdependent with those of other workers may be considered outcome indicators of integration.

Table 1

Indicators of Integration

Participation in company sports teams

Having a locker in the same area as other employees

Lunch/break same time as everyone else

Involvement in decision-making within the workplace

Car-pooling

Talking with coworkers

Going out after work for dinner/drinks

Working in proximity to others

Having a friend at work

Belonging to the union

Performing work assignments within the mainstream of the workflow

Social greetings

Going out to lunch with coworkers

Being paid wages that are comparable to those of coworkers

Career advancement

Timely and regular salary increases

Infrequent and/or unobtrusive presence of employment specialist

Wearing company uniform

Participation in shareholder program (if available)

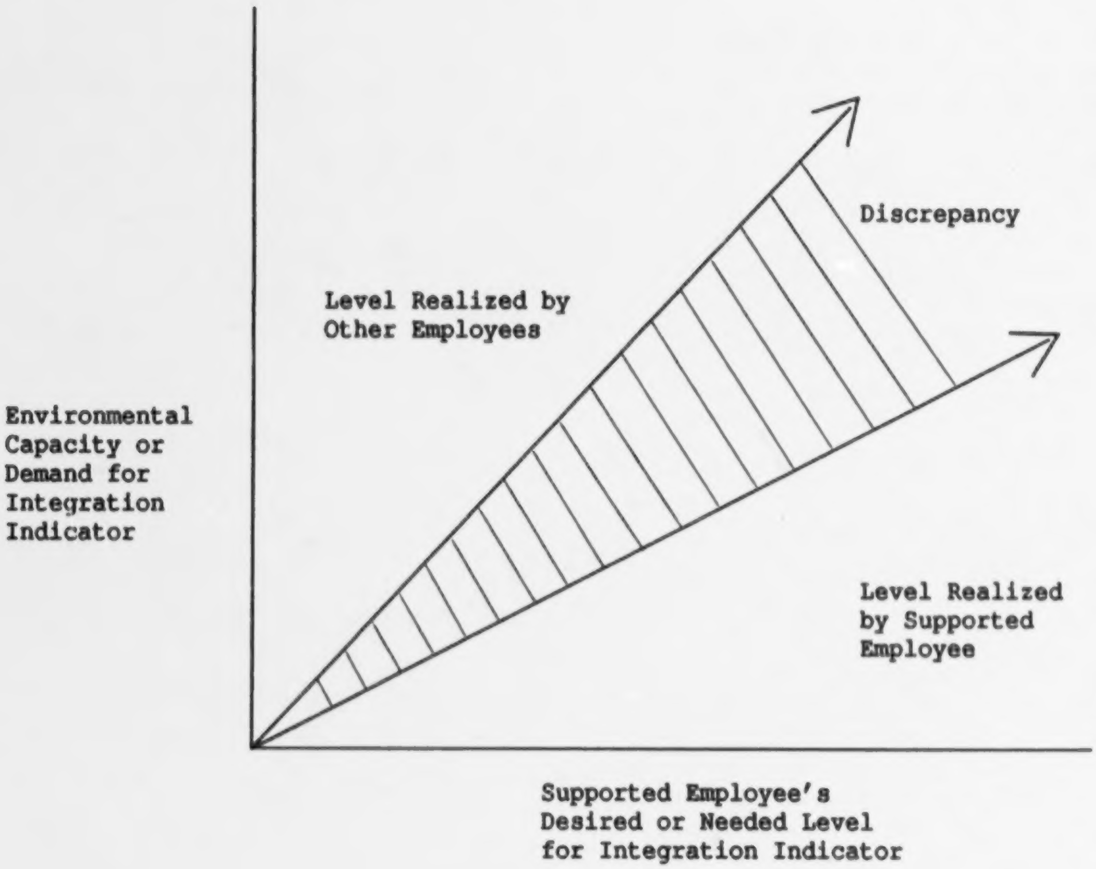
The distinction between capacity and outcome indicators of integration is schematically presented in Figure 1. As this figure indicates, any given job may have a certain capacity (or demand) for the type and amount of integration that may (or must) occur. This capacity may be plotted along the vertical axis. Likewise, an individual worker may choose or need a particular type or amount of integration in her workplace. This capacity may be plotted along the horizontal axis. An important point agreed upon by the group was that the intersection of this environmental capacity and individual choice needs further emphasis in the job matching process.

Many participants noted that the typical level of integration among the nondisabled workforce could vary dramatically from the environmental capacity. While a particular job site may have the capacity for a great deal of integration to occur among the employees, far less (or far greater) may occur due to the individual characteristics of the workforce, the "culture" of the work setting, the interpersonal relationships among these workers, and other factors.

When considering the level of integration experienced by workers with disabilities, it is important to consider the capacity of the setting and, more importantly, the level that is realized by other workers in the setting. While workers with disabilities may experience a level of integration that is less than what may be available in the environment, these workers should not be considered poorly integrated unless their level of integration is less than the level of integration realized by the other workers at that particular jobsite. It is the discrepancy between this typical level of integration and the level realized by workers with disabilities that indicates poor integration and suggests the need for facilitation efforts on the part of the supported employment provider.

Figure 1

A Conceptual Model for Considering Capacity and Outcome Indicators of Integration


Discrepancy
Level Realized by Other Employees
Environmental Capacity or Demand for Integration Indicator
Level Realized by Supported Employee
Supported Employee's Desired or Needed Level for Integration Indicator

Adapted from materials developed by Michael Collins, 1988.

What, then, is integration? We have not yet defined integration. Integration in the workplace should be considered as an environmental capacity as well as an individual outcome. A general definition of integration that could be universally applied across all employment arrangements was proposed by the working group:

> Integration is the participation of a worker in the operation of the work culture at both the environment's required level and the worker's desired level.

This definition emphasizes the match between the worker and the job and attempts to broaden the concept of integration beyond the traditional notion of physical present or social participation. Within this definition, an attempt was made to draw the link between self-determination and integration as well as to couple integration to the capacity characteristics of the setting. Working within this definition, the group identified five essential indicators of integration. These indicators included the following:

Acceptance. Integration in the workplace occurs when workers are accepted by the other members of the workforce. This acceptance might be observed by a greeting, an invitation to go out to lunch, or the recognition of the worker as a regular, contributing member of the workforce.

Interdependence. Integration is indicated by the vocational integration of the worker and not simply the social integration. When integration occurs in the workplace, the assigned tasks of the supported employee are fully enmeshed within the operations of the worksite and require interdependency with other employees throughout the worksite.

Interaction. Integration requires opportunity for interaction and discussion with fellow employees and/or customers. No interaction whatsoever is unacceptable; however, the range of acceptable interaction is highly idiosyncratic and depends on the personal characteristics of the employee, the makeup of the workforce, and the physical features of the workplace.

Opportunity for relationships. Integration in the workplace can be indicated by the opportunity for friendships and other relationships. These relationships may or may not develop; however, the opportunity for relationships to develop must exist. This opportunity can only occur when a supported employee is working within physical proximity to other nonhandicapped employees, has regular and frequent access to other employees, and has been accepted within the culture of the business.

Equal opportunity for decision-making and action. Integration in the workplace is indicated when a supported employee enjoys the same decision making powers and ability to affect the workplace as enjoyed by fellow employees. This opportunity can be demonstrated by supported employees' involvement in team planning and decision processing; membership in unions or other worker organizations; and participation in scheduling changes, work assignments, or other decisions directly affecting employees. In essence, integration in the workplace is indicated by the extent to which the supported employee is empowered within the worksite.

The group felt very strongly that this listing should be viewed as preliminary and not representative of all valued indicators of integration. Furthermore, these indicators could be realized in a job through a variety of formal and informal means. Formal means are those required by the job, while informal means are those attained through activities and processes which are not necessarily dependent upon the capacity of the job setting or the requirements of the job.

For example, attending staff meetings, being on the memo route, and having a mail slot or locker could be conceptualized as formal elements of integration. In contrast, attending parties, being included on teams, and belonging to a car-pool could be considered as informal means for integration opportunities to arise.

Facilitating Integration

The process of facilitating integration in the workplace is a phenomenon which we as professionals do not yet clearly understand. While we seem to have developed an effective system for developing and maintaining job skills, we have not yet mastered the mechanics necessary to facilitate the acceptance and belonging of supported employees within their worksites. Sometimes we are very effective in this process, often times we are not.

As the working group approached the issue of facilitating integration, we did so by first recognizing that meaningful integration cannot be directly produced. Integration, as evidenced by the indicators that we just reviewed, sometimes occurs in spite of our best intentioned efforts. The most that we can hope for is that we have provided the necessary foundation from which meaningful and durable integration may develop. Furthermore, we recognized that integration occurs only when those being integrated allow it to occur. The process of social reciprocity, by which two or more individuals develop a relationship (shall we say integrate themselves), occurs only when individual choice is allowed. Hence, attending to individual choice and characteristics must be necessary elements of any facilitation efforts.

As the working group continued to address the issue of facilitating integration, we drafted a position statement that summarized our thoughts on the topic:

The process of facilitating integration must reflect individual informed choice. It begins with a recognition of integration as a service goal and must be reflected in all components of the service delivery model.

The process of supported employment delivery. The process of facilitating integration must begin with the development of the service organization and the manner in which the organization and its members approach their mission. Clearly, if we are to facilitate integration and empowerment as outcomes of supported employment delivery, we must articulate these concepts as essential quality indicators.

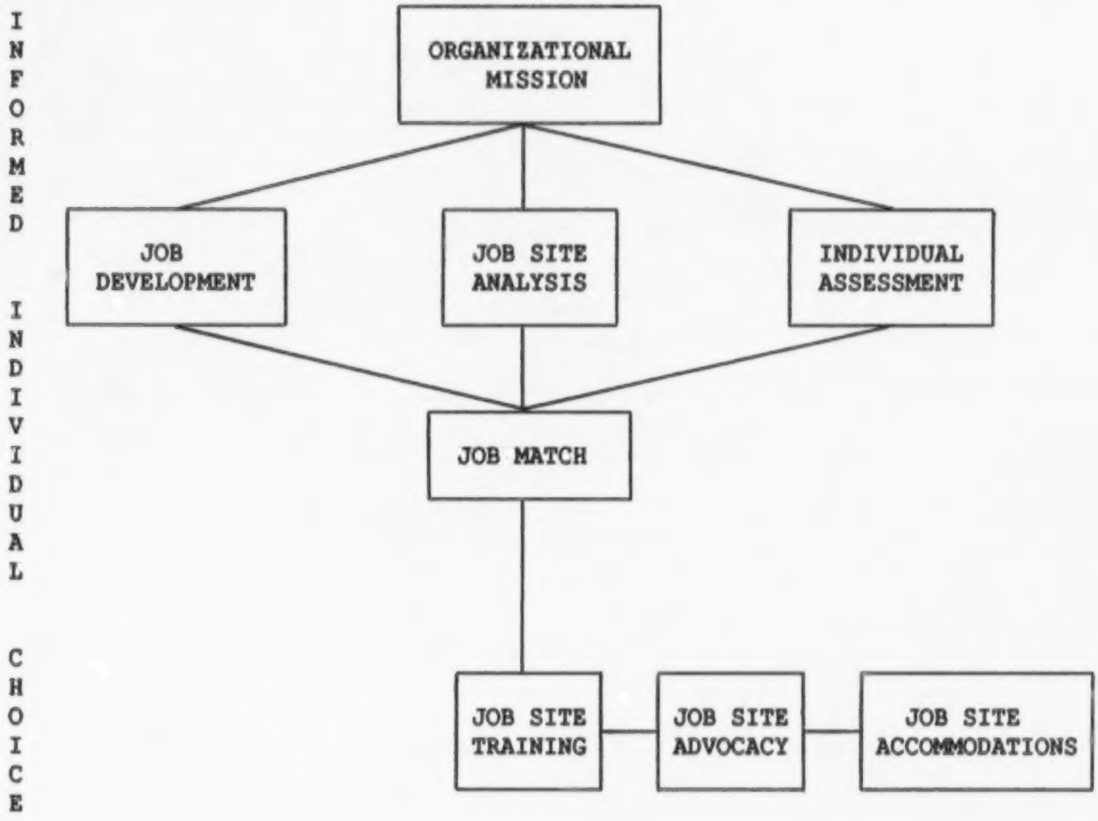
While we may not be able to directly develop or produce integration per se, the manner in which we approach our consumers, the manner in which we present these consumers to their prospective employers and fellow employees, the manner in which we continue to support our consumers in their employment, and the manner in which we evaluate supported employment services will have a profound effect upon the extent to which our consumers are integrated within their jobs and their communities.

In addition to the importance of a well-grounded values system or approach, the working group also discussed the fact that efforts to facilitate can and should be engaged in throughout the entire supported employment delivery process. Figure 2 provides a familiar schema of supported employment service delivery. Within each module, there are activities that we can use to enhance the integration of supported employees.

For example, prior to employment placement, three primary activities are typically pursued: job development, job site analysis, and individual assessment. The manner in which we engage in these activities will have a

Figure 2

Supported Employment



*** Efforts to facilitate integration should be embedded within each module of supported employment activity.

profound impact upon the extent to which supported employees are integrated. Job development activities that are guided by a mission of integration will very quickly eliminate many job opportunities which do not present significant opportunities for integration to occur. Likewise, during job site analysis with integration as a primary goal, more attention will be given to those aspects of the job (physical proximity, overlapping breaks or lunch, organized sports team, car-pool, etc.) which will directly impact upon the integration potential of the jobsite.

Due to the time limitations of the Forum, the working group was not able to fully discuss this working model or to identify critical activities for each module. However, the group discussed the importance of researchers and practitioners exploring the various activities within each of the major modules of supported employment service delivery in order to begin identifying, defining, and refining activities which have direct impacts upon worksite integration.

Facilitating integration. Facilitating integration was also examined by developing a model from which practitioners can begin to more systematically assess and develop their integration efforts. This model consists of four essential steps.

1. Specify the element of integration to be addressed. Integration, as previously discussed, may be identified by a variety of indicators or elements such as acceptance, interdependence, etc. No one of these elements in itself is indicative of integration; collectively, they begin to provide an operational definition of integration. However, it may be helpful to address these elements individually when attempting to assess or facilitate integration.

2. Determine the environmental capacity for the element specific to the individual work setting. Every employment setting is unique and must present some capacity for integration. While one employment setting may present great opportunity for interaction to occur, an alternative site may possess a greater capacity for decision making. As such, when we begin to assess the quality of integration experienced by a supported employee, we must make that assessment within the context of the capacity of the job site.

We can examine environmental capacity for integration by examining the physical features of the employment setting and by observing other employees on the worksite. Do the other employees normally take breaks together at the same time or are breaks staggered? Is there evidence of cordial relationships among coworkers? To what extent is there a sense of membership or team building within the company? By considering the experiences of other employees and by examining the physical character of the employment setting, we develop ideas about the capacity of a job setting for integration.

3. Measure the employee's realized participation in relation to the defined element. Having determined the environmental capacity for integration and having assessed the extent to which other employees are integrated, we should now assess the extent to which the supported employee's level of participation is significantly different than that experienced by other workers. This process is what we typically refer to as "discrepancy analysis". Our question here is, is there a difference (discrepancy) in the extent to which the supported employee is integrated in relation to the other employees in the worksite?

When discrepancies are found to exist, the supported employee and employment specialist may proceed to take action that will reduce this discrepancy. Such action may include specific strategies to adjust the behavior of the supported employee, the employer, fellow coworkers, or the employment specialist. If a discrepancy is not found to exist between the supported employee's level of participation and that of the other employees, then the supported employee must make the decision to either continue in the present employment in spite of the fact that a significant need cannot be addressed or may wish to seek other employment in which the opportunity for the integration element to exist is enhanced.

4. Use strategies to reduce discrepancies between the level of integration occurring within the workforce and the level of integration realized by the supported employee. A variety of strategies to facilitate the integration of a supported employee are possible. Modifying the supported employee's job so that greater proximity and interaction with fellow employees is available is one example of such a strategy. Similarly, the active involvement of coworkers and other natural supports within the workplace is another strategy that can be effectively used to facilitate integration.

The selection and implementation of any one strategy must be mediated by a host of issues. First, the dignity and self-determination of the supported employee must be recognized and enhanced by the strategies employed. Second, any strategy must be acceptable within the workplace and should fall well within the range of normal, ongoing activities. Third, strategies must make minimum use of employment specialists and paid care providers to facilitate change. As noted elsewhere, integration frequently seems to best occur without us, the professionals, being involved.

Summary Note on Major Issues

A number of main points are worthy of emphasis.

1. Integration and empowerment must be approached as essential quality service outcomes. These outcomes must be valued by the service organization if they are to be achieved.
2. In some instances, empowerment may impede integration. If we first empower those we serve, enhanced integration may not be desired. We must educate and inform individuals, but we must respect individuals for their informed decisions.
3. Integration must be viewed as a multi-faceted concept in which no universal standard can be applied. Some of the critical elements of integration include acceptance from others, interaction, interdependence in work activity, and real decision making ability.
4. Integration is affected by characteristics of the worksite, the social network of the worksite, and the individual characteristics and needs of the supported employee.

Progress and Resources

When the working group began to review the progress that has been made in promoting integration and empowerment in the workplace, we quickly found ourselves more readily identifying the challenges and work to be done. Progress in this area of supported employment has been minor in comparison to the work that remains. Even so, some very important elements of progress can be identified that provide a foundation for future efforts. In the following sections we will identify and briefly discuss the progress and challenges that the working group identified.

Progress. The greatest progress in the area of integration and empowerment has been the development and diffusion of supported employment as an alternative form of employment service. First, the realization of wages that are socially significant and the performance of socially valued activity has provided greater opportunity for empowerment in a capitalistic society such as our own. Second, employers, parents, and the general public have become more aware of the abilities of individuals with disabilities. Increasingly, people with severe disabilities are appearing as accepted members of the workforce where employers and employees alike value their role and performance. Most importantly, the general public, who, for the most part, do not have any direct role in supported employment, now have access to individuals with severe disabilities in a variety of work and community settings. Favorable attitudes of the general public toward persons with severe disabilities will ultimately determine the extent to which integration and empowerment can occur in the workplace, the school, the church, or the home.

Third, the federal authorization of supported employment must be viewed as a tremendous resource when considering efforts to integrate and empower persons with severe disabilities. The passage of Public Law 99-506, the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1986, represented the first time that the federal government has mandated a specific and measurable standard of integration for a federally-funded service. While debates continue about the validity of the "no-more-than-8-worker-rule", it is central to this discussion that we all recognize the intent of the federal government in making this rule and the tremendous effect which such a ruling will have upon future service delivery.

Resources. A variety of resources are available to individuals who are interested in integration and empowerment as they relate to supported employment. A comprehensive listing of all of these resources is beyond the scope of the Forum; however, some of the resources which can be identified include:

1. Integration Mapping

   Charles Galloway, Ph.D.
   Connecticut Department of Mental Retardation
   90 Pitkin Street
   East Hartford, CT 06108

2. Integration Survey

   R. Timm Vogelsberg, Ph.D.
   Temple University
   Ritter Hall Annex 004-00
   Philadelphia, PA 19122
   (215) 787-6567

3. Vocational Integration Research Project

   Larry Rhodes, Ph.D.
   135 Education Building
   University of Oregon
   Eugene, OR 97403
   (503) 686-5311

4. Vocational Integration Research Project

   Michael S. Shafer, Ph.D.
   Rehabilitation Research and Training Center
   Virginia Commonwealth University
   Box 2011
   Richmond, VA 23284-2011
   (804) 367-1851

5. Natural Supports

   Jan Nisbet, Ph.D.
   Institute on Disabilities
   University of New Hampshire
   Lorril Hall
   Durham, NH 03824
   (603) 862-4320

6. Center on Human Policy

Bonnie Shoultz, Ph.D.
Center on Human Policy
Syracuse University
724 Comstock Avenue
Syracuse, NY 13207
(315) 423-3851

Challenges and Work to be Done

A variety of challenges remain when we examine progress and needs with regard to integration and empowerment. The working group developed nine essential challenges that must be approached if significant progress is going to be made in understanding, measuring, and facilitating integration in the workplace.

1. Reduce the stigma of human services in private industry. Integration will be facilitated by our ability to reduce the stigma that we as human service professionals and organizations have developed about ourselves. Our agencies and our consumers must be viewed as worthy and valued members of the business community if integration is to be achieved.

2. Be more objective about integration. The growth of supported employment has been based, in part, upon the assumption that physical presence in an integrated employment setting will lead to social participation and interaction with people who are not disabled. However, there is little evidence to support this assumption. In fact, evidence is available from school integration literature to suggest that presence is not sufficient for participation and meaningful integration. Furthermore, there is an assumption that enhanced financial power resulting from supported employment will result in enhanced community integration. Unfortunately, we have not yet demonstrated this assumption. As such, we are challenged to set aside preconceived notions about integration, how it occurs, why it

should occur, and what our role should be in this occurrence. We are challenged to consider integration as it naturally occurs.

3. Better understand work and business culture. If we are going to enhance our supported employees' integration in their employment, we must better understand the work culture of employment. While industrial engineers and sociologists have long studied the variables affecting the development of "culture" within the work setting, we have yet to attend to this area or to identify the implications for integrated employment.

4. Improve strategies to facilitate natural supports. Our challenge here is twofold. First, we need to better develop strategies and techniques by which employment specialists gradually reduce or fade their assistance at the jobsite. To date, we know little about this. Concomitantly, we must better understand the process by which we facilitate supported employees' use of natural supports (such as the employer, coworkers, etc.) to facilitate integration and employment retention efforts. These supports may vary from enhancing an employer's understanding with supervising the work of a supported employee to connecting an individual with disabilities with another employee during breaks. Clearly, our challenge is to reduce the need for professional supports while insuring the effectiveness of more natural supports.

5. Better understand why and how social interaction occurs. As one member of the working group said, "We know how to task analyze potscrubbing, but we don't know how to task analyze a conversation." Our challenge, here again, is twofold. First, we need to better understand the concept of social reciprocity and social attraction in order to foster common connecting points or interests between people. Second, we need to improve our understanding of how verbal and nonverbal interactions occur and how

these interactions allow for the development of more complicated and protracted contacts and, ultimately, relationships.

6. Make better use of existing technology. Many of the working group members pointed out that a behavioral technology for promoting integration may be identified in related research and training from educational, residential, and other community settings. Our challenge is to make more efficient use of this technology to improve integration in jobs. We must insure, however, that the technology is applied in a discreet fashion which does not draw unnecessary attention to or rely unnecessarily on the direct and ongoing involvement of paid service providers.

7. Develop and use job accommodations to promote social interactions. Typically, when we think of job accommodations, we consider those activities which promote or enhance the vocational performance of the supported employee. However, a variety of job accommodations may be identified that could be applied to facilitate the interaction and integration of supported employees as well. Rearranging a worker's station to allow an unobstructed view of his fellow employees may be one simple example of such a job accommodation.

8. Remain sensitive to career and personal growth needs. Clearly, the degree to which one willingly becomes involved with the social culture of the workplace will depend in part on the extent to which that workplace meets the needs and desires of the individual. As such, we must challenge ourselves to consider individual needs and the degree to which different employment environments meet those needs.

9. Make better use of "plug-in" technology. The ability of electronic systems such as voice synthesizers, LED screens, laser pens, and other devices to significantly impact upon integration efforts has only begun to

be considered. We are presented with a significant challenge that promises to provide substantial reward.

Summary

Several key points regarding integration and empowerment may be synthesized from the group's discussion. First, integration and empowerment must be viewed as essential quality service outcomes. The process of promoting integration and empowerment must permeate all aspects of service provision related to delivery of supported employment services. Quality service systems should be responsive to the needs and desires of its constituency, and this must be clearly reflected in the manner in which service providers carry out their role.

Second, it is imperative that empowerment and informed choice-making be recognized as an individual's right, and become part of the social service culture. Students and adults must be afforded numerous opportunities to experience a variety of life situations within their natural community. Informed choice must be manifested by assuring that individuals are provided with a wide array of alternatives from which individual choice can be made.

Third, integration must be viewed as a multi-faceted concept in which no universal standard can be applied. It is affected by characteristics of the worksite, the social network of the worksite, and the individual characteristics and needs of the employee. Every employment opportunity is unique and represents some capacity for integration. When considering the level of integration experienced by workers with disabilities, it is important to consider the capacity of the site as well as the level that is realized by other workers in the setting.

What is integration? What is empowerment? How are these concepts related? The working group found it extremely difficult to discuss both of these topics simultaneously and with equal effort. A host of questions were identified; many of them were left unanswered or partially addressed. The facilitation of integration and empowerment within the workplace are phenomena we do not yet clearly understand. The greatest progress in the areas of integration and empowerment has been the development and diffusion of supported employment as an alternative form of employment. Yet, when the group began to review the progress that has been realized in the workplace, it was clear that while much has been accomplished, much more remains to be done.

In-State Economic Development and Marketing

Patricia Goodall
Virginia Commonwealth University

Dale Verstegen
Wisconsin Community Finance Authority

John Nietupski
University of Northern Iowa

In-State Economic Development and Marketing

Working Group

Moderators: John Nietupski, University of Northern Iowa

Dale Verstegen, Wisconsin Community Finance Authority

Facilitator: Patricia Goodall, VCU-RRTC

Working Group Participants:

Jackie Begg	Kent County Mental Health Board, Michigan
Ed Boeve	Minnesota Supported Employment Project
Martie Buzzard	Rehabilitation Administration and Management Programs, University of Oklahoma
John Houchin	Connecticut Department of Mental Retardation
Fred Isbister	Rehabilitation Services Administration
Doris Jamison	New York State Education Department
John Hesse	Indiana Governor's Planning Council
Thomas Major	New Jersey Department of Human Services
Ray Murphy	Ireland
Ann Noll	Florida Association for Rehabilitation Facilities
Susan Philpott	Arkansas Rehabilitation Services
Jeff Sandler	Colorado Division for Developmental Disabilities
Noelle Gay Schofield	Illinois Department of Rehabilitation Services
Lee Valenta	Washington Supported Employment Initiative
LeAnn Nelson Dahl	Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights (PACER) Center, Minneapolis

In-State Economic Development and Marketing

The purpose of this working group was to analyze state level economic development and marketing in regard to supported employment for persons with severe disabilities. One of the initial concerns of participants was identification of common definitions of in-state economic development and marketing so that there would be a starting point for discussion. Following introductory remarks by the two moderators, definitions of in-state economic development and marketing were established. The group then brainstormed issues for approximately two hours. Finally, the top three issues were chosen and ranked. The group was then able to discuss two of the three issues within the time allotted.

This paper is an attempt to capture the essence and outcome of the group's process during the Forum. The Forum process was painstaking in many ways, but the resulting discussion and written product provide the reader with a fairly comprehensive overview of in-state economic development and marketing for supported employment services.

Introductory Remarks

Have you ever wondered why 90% of supported employment placements are in smaller businesses? Have you ever wondered why the conclusion made long ago to solve the problems faced by disenfranchised groups such as immigrants, minority group members, and women has been job creation, yet a similar national agenda has not been established for people with disabilities? Have you ever wondered why all the talk about economic development for displaced workers in the rust belt and blighted inner city areas has not included people with disabilities, despite the fact that this latter group has the highest unemployment rate of any single group in America?

The answer to these questions lies in the fact that we in the human services field have not reached out beyond our domain to draw parallels between the needs of our constituency and the general population. Until very recently, we said to politicians, economic development entities, and the general population, "We'll take care of our own." We served them "in house" through an extensive network of human service agencies. However, when we talk about jobs in the community, we need to reach out far beyond the typical sphere of social services.

We in human services have not yet developed the necessary partnerships with businesses and economic development organizations necessary to insure that larger businesses will see the benefits of supported employment so that job creation efforts will include jobs for people with disabilities. We need to do so!

Marketing is the creation of jobs within existing businesses. Economic development is the creation of jobs and income through business development. These two areas hold considerable potential with regard to supported employment efforts. From a marketing standpoint, there would be tremendous job creation potential if most large businesses utilized the natural proportion of people with disabilities as part of their work force. From a development standpoint, there is tremendous job creation and income potential if half the rehabilitation facilities utilized an integrated work force for a separate community based business venture; if the vocational rehabilitation system developed 5% of their clients as business entrepreneurs utilizing an integrated work force; and if most state and federal economic development resources were conditioned on the businesses utilizing an integrated workforce.

There are significant challenges which supported employment providers must address in order to reach the goals of long-term integration for people with disabilities and long-term commitment by the business community:

1. The challenge of achieving a broad range of employment opportunities in large businesses, union shops, government agencies, and the thousands of square miles that make up rural America;
2. The challenge of developing cost effective start-up supported employment sites utilizing a non-exclusionary model of services for individuals with severe disabilities; and
3. The challenge of generating income for services to augment funding which is projected to remain level or decline.

Partnership which will result in a multitude of opportunities for both people served by social services and nondisabled persons seeking employment is needed between human services and the marketing and economic development disciplines. Why tap this potential? The answers: jobs and money! Job opportunities must be generated within existing businesses, as well as newly created or expanded businesses. Funding must be generated to preserve or expand supported employment services through the gradual conversion of rehabilitation facilities. We can only tap this potential through a partnership with business.

Partnership is defined by both parties bringing something to the table: business brings existing and newly created jobs and supported employment has the opportunity to bring an equally attractive offering to the table. Supported employment service providers can offer potential solutions to labor turnover and/or shortage problems through aggressive marketing efforts. Supported employment services will play a role in the improvement of the local economy via economic development efforts, which will create jobs for people with and without disabilities. Once the business community understands the potential and resources which supported employment is capable of providing, a long-standing partnership is realistic.

Definition of In-State Economic Development and Marketing

Following the introductory remarks by the two moderators, the group attempted to brainstorm some of the top issues within the topical area. However, it soon became apparent that the group needed additional information and one member asked for a clear definition of both economic development and marketing. This proved to be a critical question because the group was not operating from a common base of knowledge. Common definitions would give a solid point for discussion. The following definitions were given by the two moderators, who were specifically chosen to moderate because of their knowledge and expertise in economic development and marketing.

Economic Development

Economic development refers to the creation of new jobs. This can be accomplished through the start-up of new businesses, the expansion of existing businesses, or the relocation of businesses to a particular community. These new, expanded, or relocated businesses would employ an integrated work force, with a minority of people with severe disabilities. Within economic development, two approaches can be used:

1. A bottom-up approach in which technical assistance is provided to entrepreneurs or organizations such as rehabilitation agencies in identifying and screening business ideas, conducting pre-feasibility and full feasibility studies, developing a business plan, and securing financing (e.g., bank loan, equity, block grant); and

2. A top-down approach in which state public or private economic development entities encourage a proportion of newly created jobs to be targeted for supported employees.

Marketing

Marketing refers to gaining access to job opportunities within existing businesses. This may mean filling available job openings with supported employees or individually tailoring a job to a person with a disability through designing a patchwork of job opportunities previously performed by non-disabled employees. Marketing also has two approaches:

1. A bottom-up approach in which technical assistance is provided to support agencies on job development strategies; and
2. A top-down approach in which statewide efforts are made to create demand for supported employment through marketing efforts targeted to larger corporations, specific industries, or union businesses and to link the created demand with capable support agencies.

Issues

Given a common definition of economic development and marketing of supported employment services on a state level, the task of generating issues through a brainstorming process was tackled. Table 1 lists the issues identified during the brainstorming session.

The next task was to choose and prioritize the issues into those which the group felt were top priority. The three top ranked issues are identified below:

1. Planning and initial start-up of statewide (or in-state) economic development and marketing efforts;
2. Implementation of statewide economic development and marketing efforts beyond the start-up phase; and
3. Institutionalization/long-term continuation of statewide economic development and marketing efforts.

These three issues can be viewed as a progression from initial planning and start-up on a state level project basis (Issue #1), to establishment of such efforts on a separate local level program basis (Issue #2), to embedding such efforts into already existing statewide economic development

Table 1

In-State Economic Development and Marketing Issues

Employer incentives

Consolidation of all disability groups regarding marketing

Skills/technical assistance for economic development/business planning

Resources available (technical, financial) for economic development

Evaluate benefit/cost of different models

Marketing in a poor economy

Determine employer needs

Break corporate barrier, contact personnel departments

Marketing in a good economy

Insuring quality employment opportunities

Strategies on start-up

Negotiation with companies, demand and supply

Staffing/recruitment

Promoting risk taking (how to evaluate risk)

Parental involvement

Local implementation

Market benefits for zero-reject model

Managing human services with profitability regarding supports for workers

Cooperative structure to business

Role of people without disability in entrepreneurial ventures and marketing organizations (Issue #3). Placed on a five year timeline, this progression could be viewed as two to three years of project level (Issue #1) status, program level status (Issue #2) in years three to five, and institutionalized status (Issue #3) beyond the fifth year.

The end result would be that supported employment would achieve integral status within a state's efforts to create job opportunities for targeted populations in existing businesses (marketing) and would create jobs through business start-up, expansion, or relocation (economic development).

The top two issues are discussed in some depth within this chapter; the third issue will be mentioned, but time was insufficient to cover elements, resources, and challenges for this issue.

Issue #1: Planning and Initial Start-Up of In-State Economic Development and Marketing Efforts

The issue of "initial planning and start-up" is viewed as the first step in statewide economic development for persons with disabilities. The elements, resources, and challenges identified by the working group in regard to this issue are discussed in this section of the chapter.

Elements

Participants identified eight primary elements within the issue of planning and initial start-up of statewide economic development and marketing efforts. These elements are listed in Table 2 and are briefly discussed below.

Identify an agency in which the economic development and marketing project might be housed. There are many things to consider when planning the start-up of a statewide program. Some of these considerations focus on

Table 2

Elements Contained Within Issue #1: Planning and Initial Start-Up of Statewide Economic Development and Marketing Efforts

1. Identify an agency in which the economic development and marketing project might be housed.
    a. Close ties to/expertise in economic development
    b. Close ties/connections to business community
    c. Flexible organizations -- open to innovation
    d. Non-bureaucratic
    e. Not human service agency or university except for Small Business Development Center
2. Set goals/objectives
    a. Needs assessment -- Does state need to focus more on marketing or economic development? What is appropriate mix?
    b. Set reasonable expectations for first year -- activity level rather than outcomes (e.g., number of business plans developed rather than number of jobs created; number of corporations/trade associations contacted, rather than number of corporations committing to hiring a certain number of supported employees)
    c. As project enters second and third year, goals/objectives can be projected in terms of numbers of placement/job creation outcomes
3. Developing funding for the project
    a. Staff and expenses
    b. Discretionary venture development fund to assist in business planning for most promising business ventures
    c. Discretionary fund to assist supported employment agencies in funding local marketing/job development/support efforts
4. Identify staff involved in economic development and marketing project
    a. Blend of sales, marketing, business development background with human service/supported employment background
    b. Might consider two people -- one from business, one from supported employment
    c. Technical expertise, personal characteristics, and presentation skills for both human service and business arena

Table 2 (continued)

5. Staff training
   a. Extensive, up-front training
   b. Observation of quality supported employment programs
   c. Gather and review available marketing and economic development materials
   d. Familiarity with economic development resources in state
6. Develop process/strategy for marketing efforts
   a. Message/content
   b. Medium
   c. Process for linking interested businesses with quality support agencies
   d. Process for awarding mini-grants to assist supported employment agencies in expanding services to meet increased demand created through marketing
   e. Work plan/timeline developed
7. Develop process for soliciting, screening, and selecting business ideas for in-depth technical assistance
   a. Develop a Request for Proposal (RFP) calling for business ideas
   b. Determine best ways to distribute RFP to rehabilitation agencies, clients with business ideas, entrepreneurs, other community-based agencies
   c. Develop criteria and process for screening business ideas
   d. Develop process for distributing venture development grants for business plan development
   e. Develop work plan/timeline
8. Develop an evaluation plan (i.e., how will project be evaluated, how often, and by whom?)
   a. Form small advisory group
   b. Advisory group includes funding source representative and business representative

who will perform this function -- should it be a human services agency or an already existing state agency? Or a combination of both?

Clearly, an agency or organization that has close ties to the business community and expertise in economic development would be most appropriate. This would support the philosophy of approaching the business community from a partnership stance rather than as a human services agency asking for help. General characteristics of the chosen agency would include flexibility and an openness to innovation. High on the list of characteristics is a requirement that the agency be non-bureaucratic and not a human service agency or university (except perhaps a university-oriented Small Business Development Center, which could offer technical assistance).

Set goals and objectives. First and foremost, a needs assessment should be conducted within each state in order to determine an appropriate mix of economic development and marketing activity. Does each state need to focus more on economic development or more on marketing? For example, a group member stated that in New Jersey, there is a greater need for a statewide marketing program since the availability of jobs is not a problem.

An important point regarding the development of goals and objectives during the planning stage is that it is more reasonable to set activity levels rather than outcomes for the first year. It is important to refine the plan and the process and not get caught up in unreasonable goals which cannot be met. For example, concentrate on the number of corporations/trade associations contacted rather than on the number of corporations committed to hiring a certain number of employees. During the second and third year of the project, numbers of placements and jobs created can be emphasized.

Develop funding for the project. A major concern involved in the start-up of a statewide economic development and marketing project is, of course, funding. One option is the funding of staff and project activities through existing state departments of economic development which often have discretionary money available. Such discretionary money could be used to assist businesses or potential businesses in plans which would involve supported employment services or the funds could be utilized to aid supported employment agencies in local marketing and/or job development efforts.

Funding might also come from end of the year state vocational rehabilitation dollars that would otherwise lapse if not encumbered for legitimate services. It was suggested that many states annually find themselves with available resources at the end of the fiscal year. Such resources might provide a vehicle for funding statewide marketing and economic development projects in supported employment.

Identify staff to be involved. Several ideas were generated related to staffing issues. Most agreed that a sales, marketing, and business background blended with supported employment knowledge would be ideal. It was also suggested that perhaps hiring two individuals could be considered -- one from business and one from supported employment. Characteristics for individuals in this position would include technical expertise (particularly in business development) and personal characteristics and presentation skills necessary for both the human service and business arena.

Staff training. Extensive, up-front training for the persons hired into such a project is considered to be critical. Observation of quality supported employment programs should be an initial part of the training. Firsthand experience in the success of supported employment services will more likely assure that the philosophy and motives of supported employment are considered on an equal basis with business philosophy and motives.

Develop a process/strategy for marketing efforts. Following staffing issues, questions centered around what activities the project would be carrying out. Initial concerns are how to let everyone know what the project entails and what it could offer to business and supported employment providers. Therefore, the development of a marketing plan was included as a vital element. Points to be considered included specifying what the message or content of the marketing plan would be and how it would be implemented. In terms of marketing, overall efforts will be on linking businesses with supported employment providers.

Several members suggested that there could be a process in which mini-grants would be awarded to supported employment providers for expanding services to meet the anticipated increased demand created through statewide marketing efforts. The issue of creating a demand for supported employment services that perhaps could not be met by local supported employment providers was raised on several occasions and certainly is an area that deserves additional study.

Develop a process for soliciting, screening, and selecting business ideas for in-depth technical assistance. This element encompasses the idea of encouraging human service agencies and individuals with disabilities to develop business ideas. The establishment and/or expansion of businesses formed by disability agencies or by individuals with disabilities themselves, with assistance provided by the economic development and marketing project, reflects a growing trend to merge the best of business and human service for the ultimate purpose of providing jobs for individuals with severe disabilities.

The first task is to develop a Request for Business Proposals (RFBP) calling for business ideas. Next, determine how to distribute the RFBP to rehabilitation agencies, consumers with business ideas, entrepreneurs, and other community-based agencies. Written criteria should be established, along with a process for screening the business ideas received through the RFBP. Finally, proposals must be reviewed and business venture development grants awarded.

Develop an evaluation plan. There must be a process by which the economic development and marketing project is evaluated. One of the first steps recommended is to form an advisory group which would include representatives from the funding source of the project, the business community, and individuals with disabilities. Additional members could be chosen as needed.

Resources

The resources related to the planning and start-up of a statewide economic development and marketing plan were divided into three major sections: marketing expertise, expertise in economic development, and funding of start-up economic development and marketing projects. Many of the resources listed are general in nature and reflect resources which are available in most states (e.g., Chambers of Commerce, Private Industry Councils, Departments of Vocational Rehabilitation, etc.). The list in Table 3 is by no means exhaustive, but may serve as a useful reference tool for individuals interested in obtaining help in planning and starting up a statewide economic development and marketing project.

An ideal source for technical assistance during the planning and start-up stages is to locate states which are currently operating a program.

Table 3

Resources Related to Issue #1: Planning and Initial Start-Up of Statewide Economic Development and Marketing Efforts

1. For Marketing Expertise:

    a. Ad Councils
    b. Advocacy groups such as the Association for Retarded Citizens of the United States (ARC/US)
    c. Chamber of Commerce
    d. Colorado DD Council
    e. Wisconsin Supported Employment Program
    f. Integrated Resources -- Steve Zivolich (Orange Co., California)
    g. Corporations:
        1) ACE
        2) Bell Telephone Executive Loan Program
    h. SCORE
    i. Local/state supported employment business advisory councils
    j. Trade associations
    k. Trade unions
    l. Job services
    m. Private industry councils

2. For Expertise in Economic Development:

    a. Community development corporations
    b. Statewide public/private economic development entities
    c. USDA extention services
    d. University Small Business Development Centers
    e. Local economic development entities
    f. Private industry councils

3. For Funding of Start-up of Economic Development Marketing Projects

    a. Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) year-end Title I funds that otherwise would lapse
    b. VR Title VI dollars
    c. Statewide supported employment project money
    d. Foundation monies (e.g., Dole Foundation)
    e. Department of Human Services monies
    f. Legislative appropriation

Although there are not many states combining economic development/marketing with supported employment services, some do exist.

A leader in this area is Wisconsin. Briefly, the Wisconsin Department of Development (a state-funded agency), in conjunction with the State Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, has been involved in assisting rehabilitation facilities and individuals with disabilities in creating integrated work opportunities. Other states which have statewide programs of economic development and marketing of supported employment services include Colorado, California, and Illinois. Data from these states need to be disseminated so that other states may investigate these models.

Challenges

Challenges were not difficult to identify, because in many instances a statewide program simply does not exist. Therefore, starting from ground zero to plan and start-up such a program is a tremendous challenge in and of itself. However, some specific areas of potential problems are listed in Table 4.

One of the primary challenges is to become familiar with developments in other states. A forum such as this one, in which several states gather to discuss issues and develop a proceedings manual in which the information gleaned during the forum is disseminated would be a first step. The group felt strongly that this process needs to continue, but that establishing effective networks between programs remains a major challenge.

Many of the elements identified under Issue #1 were viewed as challenges by the group: selecting an agency to house the project, funding, establishing a marketing message, and meeting the demand for supported employment services created by the project. Additional areas of concern included the cost effectiveness of the project and the perception of the

Table 4

Challenges Related to Issue #1: Planning and Initial Start-Up of Economic Development and Marketing Efforts

1. Building effective networks to know what other states are doing in these areas, how they are doing it, and successful strategies employed
2. Developing/creating funding mechanisms to establish such programs
3. Identifying and recruiting the right agency to house economic development/marketing project
4. Determining the appropriate marketing message
5. Deciding what to do when demand is created for new/existing jobs but support agencies are not capable of delivering adequate supports
6. Determining an appropriate message when marketing supported employment for persons with extremely low productivity, interfering behavior challenges, etc. How do you "sell" supported employment yet have a zero-reject supported employment services model?
7. Addressing concerns of small businesses in regard to unfair competition
8. Developing cost-effective marketing and economic development efforts
9. Insuring quality support services, especially if entrenched agencies are to deliver services

business community that non-profit agencies becoming involved in business ventures might have an unfair competitive advantage.

Finally, and most importantly, a group member challenged us with a question on how to insure quality supported employment services for individuals with disabilities. If existing agencies suddenly get into the business of providing supported employment, it becomes necessary to monitor the quality of those services, including personnel, procedure, and work site characteristics. How to do this is indeed a major responsibility for every state that becomes involved in statewide economic development and marketing efforts.

Issue #2: Establishing Long-Term Programs in Statewide Economic Development and Marketing

How to embed economic development and marketing practices on a local program level is the second issue addressed by the group. The elements, resources, and challenges in regard to this second issue are briefly discussed in the following section.

Elements

Five major elements related to the establishment of long-term programs in statewide economic development and marketing were identified. These elements are listed in Table 5 and a brief discussion of each follows.

Develop a process for measuring and evaluating results. In order to move from a start-up phase to an established position within a state, it will be necessary to evaluate the efforts of the project. This element addresses the concerns related to project evaluation. Vital considerations include specifying whether the initial goals and objectives of the project have been met and determining relevant data to collect to support a position. (For example, it was mentioned earlier that during the start-up

Table 5

Elements Contained Within Issue #2: Establishing Long-Term Programs in State Economic Development and Marketing Efforts

1. Develop a process for measuring and evaluating results
    a. Are goals and objectives being reached?
    b. What are the data units?
    c. How do you gather the data?
2. Locate an identifiable niche within a state
    a. Specify project tasks and activities
    b. Target audience for marketing presentations
    c. Target audience for technical assistance
3. Develop a process for making technical assistance available
    a. Announce Request For Business Ideas (RFBI) proposals
    b. Conduct an information session regarding RFBI
    c. RFBI distributed at a consistent time each year
4. Establish a governing body
    a. Funding
    b. Access to influential political and corporate community leaders
    c. Guidance
5. Market the project and the successes that have occurred

phase of the project it is more appropriate to specify number of company/corporate contacts as a goal rather than number of jobs or persons placed into jobs.)

Once the type of data to be collected has been determined, a method of gathering and analyzing the data must be developed. Documentation of all project activity should occur during the initial start-up phase. These data should be compiled into a meaningful form for analysis and distribution.

Locate an appropriate niche within a state. This element refers to the search for a stable, long-term position within a state. Often during the start-up period such a project will be considered a temporary demonstration project. During this second phase, the project is attempting to gain full legitimacy by establishing long-term status on a state level. Specifying what the project entails (i.e., what activities does the project carry out that are not duplicated by other departments or projects within the state?) and showing a need for the project based on the initial needs assessment are steps toward the goal of establishing the project on a long-term basis.

Based on the results of the initial phase of the project, narrow and refine the activities of the project for phase two. Determine what has been successful in terms of becoming an established resource for supported employment assistance for both businesses and human service agencies. Determine what is needed within each state and seek to fill that need.

Develop a process for accessing resources. This element refers to developing a predictable process for making technical assistance available to local supported employment programs and businesses. A major task to be carried out by the state project would involve the issuing of Requests for Business Proposals (RFBP). The RFBPs should be distributed at a consistent time each year and an informational session regarding the RFBP should be conducted for interested parties to encourage wider response.

Establish a governing body. A governing body should have input into areas of funding a project activity. Representatives from supported employment, economic development and marketing, business, and persons with disabilities should be included. Individuals who have access to influential political, corporate, and policy development figures would be extremely helpful. Members of the governing board should adhere to the philosophy of an opportunity for integrated employment for all individuals.

Market the program and successes that have occurred. During years two to three, a major project activity would be to publicize the successes of the project throughout the state. In an effort to legitimize a statewide economic development and marketing project for supported employment services, it is crucial that benefit cost data and numbers of jobs created/ numbers of persons placed into jobs are made known to those in a position to help establish the project. Various methods could be employed to market these results, such as newsletters, public service messages, newspaper articles, and radio interviews, as well as personal contact by letter or telephone.

Resources

The richest resources will be those states which currently have established programs of economic development and marketing for supported employment. Some of these states, listed in Table 6, are in various phases of development and would provide a wealth of information related to challenges faced and possible solutions.

The group also agreed that information dissemination on a national basis would be extremely worthwhile. Mentioned as vehicles for this

Table 6

Resources Related to Issue #2: Establishing Long-Term Programs in Statewide Economic Development and Marketing Efforts

1. Experience (over the next two to three years) of states that are currently either exploring, beginning to develop, or have developed marketing and economic development efforts (e.g., Wisconsin, Illinois, Colorado, Minnesota, Oregon, Washington)
2. Professional journals through which current projects might publicize their efforts
3. Trade journal and/or corporate newsletter articles promoting/demonstrating the benefits of supported employment
4. State and/or national legislators who support inclusion of persons with disabilities into the mainstream of society
5. Well-placed professionals in human services who have been instrumental in elevating project status efforts to program level status

dissemination were professional human service journals, trade journals, and corporate newsletters highlighting the benefits of supported employment projects. In addition, state legislators who support the integration of persons with disabilities into the work force would be important advocates for a state project. Finally, professionals in the human services field who have been instrumental in state level programs serving individuals with disabilities are an excellent resource (e.g., state rehabilitation and state level supported employment program personnel).

Challenges

Challenges to establishing such projects are listed in Table 7. Many of the challenges of planning and start-up continue during the establishment phase. Raising awareness about local supported employment programs, gaining legitimacy, and networking among programs and among states remain major difficulties.

Assuring longevity of the state projects and the local programs was an important topic of focus for the group. Concern was expressed about how to monitor statewide efforts because negative publicity in one program or in one state could be damaging to projects that are attempting to maintain quality standards. A related challenge centered around how to insure a continuing business commitment to hiring supported employees. Positive publicity emphasizing that supported employment is not a fad is a message that the business community must hear.

A final challenge to be considered is one that came up repeatedly, namely, what to do if and when the demand for supported employment services exceeds available providers. This, indeed, is a major challenge to be faced by professionals involved in the establishment of long-term programs of statewide economic development and marketing and reinforces the need for

Table 7

Challenges Related to Issue #2: Establishing Long-Term Programs in Statewide Economic Development and Marketing Efforts

1. Getting pilot projects in economic development and marketing in sufficient numbers of states to raise awareness and establish legitimacy
2. Networking/marketing so that successful efforts in one state are made known to decision makers in other states
3. Insuring high quality efforts in states attempting economic development and marketing efforts -- bad publicity can be extremely damaging to efforts to legitimize such programs
4. Insuring continued business/corporate commitment to hiring supported employees (i.e., supported employment is not a fad)
5. What to do if/when demand exceeds available support resources

supported employment implementation efforts to be coupled with marketing efforts.

Issue #3: Embedding/Institutionalizating Economic Development and Marketing Efforts into Existing Statewide Organizations

Although the group did not get a chance to address Issue #3, the three issues identified during the Forum are essentially the basic steps in the process of starting up, establishing, and institutionalizing a statewide program of economic development and marketing for supported employment services. According to the moderators, this process would take approximately three to five years to accomplish. They offered a few remarks on Issue #3 in ending our Forum session.

Within a state's economic development and marketing entities, supported employment would ideally achieve comparable status with that targeted to other groups (e.g., displaced workers, blighted inner city areas, individuals over 55 years of age, women, minority groups, and youth). Consultants with expertise in economic development and marketing for persons with disabilities, particularly professionals from vocational rehabilitation, would be an integral part of the organization. Achieving integrated work opportunities for individuals with severe disabilities can truly be a shared commitment between business and rehabilitation on one level and also between economic development and rehabilitation/supported employment professionals on the level of statewide program implementation.

Summary

As more and more states become involved in supported employment, it is natural to look at what has been successful with other special needs groups in terms of finding and creating jobs within the community. That is what economic development and marketing in supported employment are all about:

seeking to integrate the employment needs of persons with severe disabilities within a state's presently existing program of economic development and marketing.

A dual strategy applied to in-state economic development and marketing appears to be the most fruitful, utilizing what is needed most within a particular state. For example, in some states economic development does not really seem necessary because the jobs are available and the demand for laborers exists. However, an emphasis on marketing is needed to let employers know about an untapped labor force through supported employment services.

Marketing consists of communication -- communicating a belief in a product. In this case, the product is supported employment services. Across the United States, supported employment is a product that many rehabilitation professionals believe in wholeheartedly. The next step is to carry the message to state departments of economic development and to the businesses within our states.

The topics of in-state economic development and marketing were difficult to tackle. Only a handful of states were known to have included persons with severe disabilities and supported employment services in a state level program of economic development. It was obvious that there is a high level of interest based on the demand for information from the two knowledgeable moderators. This specific Forum topic has pointed out a need for more vigorous education of supported employment personnel in the areas of economic development and marketing on a national basis.

Long-Term Funding

Sherril Moon
Virginia Commonwealth University

John Stern
Office of Special Education
and Rehabilitative Services

Long-Term Funding

Working Group

Moderator: John Stern, OSERS

Facilitator: Sherril Moon, VCU-RRTC

Working Group Participants:

Richard Albert	Michigan Rehabilitation Services
Barbara Bennett	Delaware Supported Employment Project
Robert E. Brabham	National Rehabilitation Association
Vance Coover	Pennsylvania Supported Employment Project
Christine Dahlberg	Indiana Governor's Planning Council
Barbara Fagen-Brent	Oregon Supported Employment Project
Linda Goodman	Connecticut Department of Mental Health/Mental Retardation
Zeek Harris	Texas Department of Mental Health/Mental Retardation
Paula Hirt	Maryland Department of Developmental Disabilities
Christine Mason	National Association of Rehabilitation Facilities
Rick S. McAllister	New Hampshire Vocational Rehabilitation Supported Employment Project
Joseph R. Piccolino	New York State Department of Education, Supported Employment Group
Cynthia Rauso	New Jersey Easter Seals
Jim Rothrock	Virginia Department of Rehabilitation Services
Milton Tyree	Kentucky Human Development Institute
Debby Vancovern	North Carolina Supported Employment Project
R. Timm Vogelsberg	Temple University

Long-Term Funding

The mission of the long-term funding group was to identify one to three issues relevant to the long-term funding of supported employment and to specify resources and challenges related to these issues. Because funding is such a complicated aspect of supported employment, it is difficult to separate its components into discrete issues. However, the following statement framed the task: "There is a lack of a comprehensive, coherent federal policy enhancing long-term funding of supported employment." The second issue that we decided to discuss if time permitted was "the need to develop community support networks including funding for supported employment."

Before consensus on an issue was reached several topics were raised, all of which deserve attention and ultimately require solutions. These topics were then categorized into four broad issues for purposes of discussion and selection of a primary issue. The issues and their related topics are included in Table 1. This table serves as a guide for any group or individual wishing to analyze the long-term funding dilemma.

The Lack of a Comprehensive, Coherent Federal Policy Enhancing Supported Employment

The issue of "federal policy" ranked as the most critical item for discussion for 17 of the 19 participants. Major elements of the issue, as identified by the group, and resources and challenges surrounding this issue are discussed in this section of the chapter.

Elements

For purposes of this forum, "elements" are defined as those components, factors, or characteristics that make up, influence, or result in an identified issue. The participants raised concerns about several primary

Table 1

Funding Issues and Related Topics

1. Federal/State Models and Policy
    - lack of federal/state models for funding coordination
    - stability of funding
    - funding for all consumer groups (noncategorical)
    - redirection of existing funds
    - continuation of state systems-change funding
    - Social Security amendments and other legislation
2. Community Involvement
    - parental/family involvement
    - redirection of existing funds
    - local community responsibility, commitment, and values
3. Entitlement/Legislation
    - more effective use of Medicaid funds
    - (non) entitlement of adult services
    - parental/family involvement
    - funding for all client groups (noncategorical)
    - Social Security amendments
4. Provider Involvement
    - provider involvement in funding
    - seed funds for conversion

Note. This order represents the participants' ranking of issues according to importance for discussion.

elements of long-term funding, including: the current federal funding model, other viable models, stability of funding, collaboration, Medicaid funding, lack of federal definitions and regulations, federal priorities, and the relationship of federal and state systems. These elements are discussed briefly below.

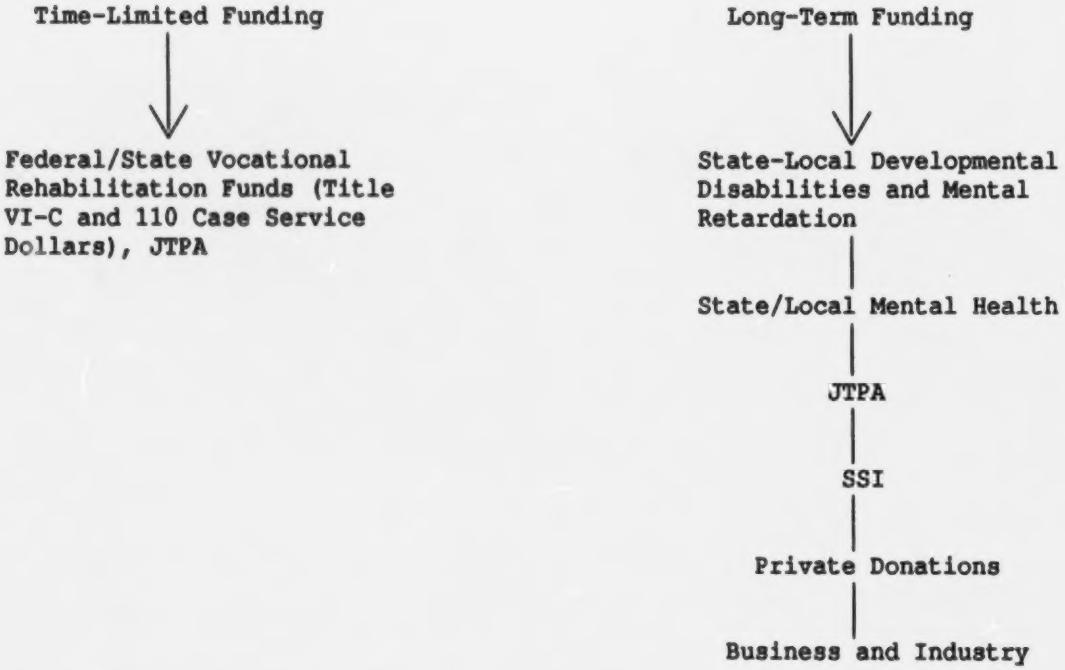
The current funding model. The 1986 amendments to the Vocational Rehabilitation Act (P.L. 99-506) include language specific to supported employment. These amendments make clear the distinction between time-limited funding and long-term funding. The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) supported employment regulations specify that Title VI-C and 110 funds can only be used for time-limited funding. The regulations further require that vocational rehabilitation counselors must collaborate with other social service agencies in order to secure the necessary long-term funding (see Figure 1). These other sources of long-term funding include a range of programs but few are designed to provide funding on a long-term basis. Often funds are combined from several sources to provide the necessary support with no real assurance they will continue from year to year. Regulations do not exist for long-term funding, nor do specific appropriations provide a source of long-term funding.

In short, the current model has rules and monies to provide the time-limited funding component of supported employment but takes no direct responsibility to ensure that long-term funding exists. The participants agreed that this was the greatest obstacle facing implementers of supported employment today.

Various state funding models. Several states are seeing some degree of success in providing supported employment by administering both time-limited funding and long-term funding through a single program or agency. For

Figure 1

Supported Employment Funding Sources


Time-Limited Funding
Federal/State Vocational Rehabilitation Funds (Title VI-C and 110 Case Service Dollars), JTPA
Long-Term Funding
State-Local Developmental Disabilities and Mental Retardation
State/Local Mental Health
JTPA
SSI
Private Donations
Business and Industry

example, state mental retardation/developmental disabilities offices in Colorado, Connecticut, and Washington prioritize their day program funds for supported employment in such a way that no distinction is made between time-limited and long-term funding. This enables the total employment service training program to be funded from the same source. Data from these states need to be disseminated quickly so that programs in other states may investigate these models as funding alternatives.

Instability of long-term funding sources. Related to the lack of specific identification of long-term funding sources is the temporary nature of most revenue sources. For example, many social service programs which are used as a source of long-term support are designed to provide temporary or periodic support such as On-the-Job Training (OJT) funds, Supplemental Security Administration's Plan for Achieving Self-Sufficiency (SSA-PASS), and foundation grants. Even longer term programs such as day treatment programs for persons who are developmentally disabled or mentally ill are funded through state legislatures annually or biannually. This can create funding lapses or inconsistencies in service provision.

Collaboration between funding sources. Although regulations pertaining to Title VI-C of the 1986 Rehabilitation Act require collaboration between state rehabilitation agencies and other social service agencies in order to obtain long-term funding, most states are not finding complete success in doing so. No agency is really required to collaborate, and because these agencies have so many other fiscal responsibilities, supported employment may not be a major priority. The consequences of not obtaining a funding commitment from these other agencies is resulting in some states not being able to utilize Title VI-C funds or in their having to use these funds for long-term support which minimizes the number of consumers who can be served.

Use of Medicaid Title XIX, ICF-MR monies. Most states participate in the Title XIX Intermediate Care Facility for the Mentally Retarded (ICF-MR) program and use these federal funds to defray the costs of a variety of programs for people who are developmentally disabled and/or mentally retarded. A large number of these individuals could benefit from supported employment, however, ICF-MR regulations greatly limit the use of these federal funds for supported employment. For the estimated 55,000 individuals residing in certified community-based ICF-MRs, federal regulations do not include supported employment as an acceptable reimbursable service. Another approximately 21,000 people are receiving an ICF-MR waiver service which allows supported employment, but the regulations limit this service to only those who were directly placed from an ICF-MR facility. The Title XIX program does pay for prevocational, day treatment, and social and living skill training; thus, federal funds are being expended many times at a cost in excess of supported employment costs. The Medicaid Title XIX ICF-MR program does have the fiscal potential to be a long-term resource.

Differing definitions and regulations. Many federal programs, including those regulated by the Vocational Rehabilitation Act, Developmental Disabilities Act, Education for All Handicapped Children Act, and Medicaid Title XIX ICF-MR regulations, reference supported employment. The Social Security Administration also has programs which indirectly relate to supported employment. The definitions, regulations, language, and values implied from these five federal agencies differ significantly and cause confusion and disharmony within the current model. Varying definitions of "severe handicapping conditions" cause considerable difficulty in specifying which consumers are eligible for supported employment.

Progress in Solving Long-Term Funding Issues

Our group identified current progress made by federal, state, and local programs in solving long-term funding issues. Table 2 outlines the areas of progress specified by the participants. Although the list appears to be long, the actual progress being made in each is scattered and much work remains.

Challenges in Solving Long-Term Funding Problems

Along with recent progress, challenges in solving funding problems were also identified by our group. Most of the challenges related directly to the previously delineated elements associated with the current federal funding model.

A major challenge involves potential changes in the federal government which are needed to ensure both time-limited funding and long-term funding. While there was general consensus that it would be helpful for some federal agency to take greater responsibility for the long-term funding issues and implementation within the states, there seems to be no easy answer as to what specific organizational change might accomplish this. The possibility of developing a new federal agency responsible for both types of funding was identified as one option. Another was to develop a council or agency which would coordinate current federal agencies involved with supported employment, including the Rehabilitative Services Administration (RSA), Special Education Programs (SEP), Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD), Social Security Administration (SSA), and Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA). Another option might be to assign the Rehabilitative Services Administration the responsibility for long-term funding and to develop regulations for long-term support which would complement the time-limited resources.

Table 2

Areas in Which Progress Has Been Made in Solving Long-Term Funding Issues Related to the Federal Model Now Existing

1. Collaboration between the state Vocational Rehabilitation agency and the agency providing long-term support is effectively occurring in some states. The agencies providing the long-term funding are usually the state Developmental Disabilities/Mental Retardation and Mental Health programs.

2. The number of service providers providing supported employment services is increasing gradually. These include existing agencies which previously provided primarily sheltered employment and new non-facility based agencies which only provide supported employment.

3. State Vocational Rehabilitation agencies are serving an increasing number of individuals with severe disabilities including many persons with complex, multiple challenges.

4. Supported employment is recognized by an increasing number of social service agencies serving individuals with disabilities.

5. Community-based services are increasing in many states across the nation, thus providing for additional resources for supported employment including monies for long-term support.

6. Gradual changes are being made with the Medicaid Title XIX ICF-MR program allowing supported employment as a reimbursable service. An example of this is the community waiver alternative.

7. School personnel and parents are more aware of transition issues and recognize the importance of work experience for students with severe disabilities prior to leaving school.

8. Some federal networking is taking place, particularly between the Departments of Education, Labor, and Health and Human Services.

9. Service providers are pursuing new ways to obtain long-term funding resources. These include use of foundations, Job Training Partnership Act, and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) work incentives, and/or a combination of these resources.

10. Increasing levels of state general funds are being appropriated for supported employment.

11. More attention is being given to consumer outcomes and benefits along with quality of life issues for individuals with severe disabilities.

12. A greater attempt is being made to involve persons with severe disabilities in the planning/service delivery/monitoring process.

A second major challenge concerns reviewing the existing system to develop strategies for increasing long-term funding resources by modifying current programs. Minor changes in HCFA policy could result in millions of federal Title XIX dollars being available to fund long-term support. Passage of the current Medicaid Reform Bill would provide funds for individuals in ICF-MRs to receive supported employment and could potentially serve many persons that are on waiting lists or will be leaving school and are in need of a supported employment service. If the SSA would allow states to retain a portion of the Social Security Income (SSI) savings that result from increasing earnings of SSI recipients for long-term funding to employ additional SSI recipients, not only would SSA over time receive back all of their loss, but thousands of additional individuals could be working.

A third challenge relates to the fact that no federal agency has "line" responsibility for adults with severe disabilities. Several questions were raised related to this issue. For example, should the federal government have an agency with program authority and funding responsibility for people with developmental disabilities and mental illness similar to agencies in the states? Also, how can the federal agencies responsible for supported employment build an understanding and relationship with state agencies which have the potential to provide long-term support?

A fourth challenge was posed as a question: "How much additional money should be added to the funding of supported employment from federal dollars?" Participants ultimately decided that simply adding dollars right now might not help since all funds would still be time-limited under the vocational rehabilitation authority. In addition, only a few states could effectively utilize this money since many do not have a source of long-term funds.

Several other challenges were mentioned, but a lack of time prevented detailed discussions. These challenges are listed in Table 3.

Recommendations

Although the purpose of this forum was not to determine specific recommendations for dealing with supported employment implementation issues, discussion within our group did prompt several possibilities related to the current federal funding model. These ideas are outlined here.

Existing funding sources. The first recommendation concerns the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) developing a formalized relationship with the state developmental disabilities/mental retardation (DD/MR) agency and mental health (MH) agency directors. For DD/MR directors this could be done through the National Association of State Mental Retardation Program Directors. This is necessary in order for a joint relationship to secure long-term funding to occur, and it will help OSERS understand the priorities, resources, and constraints of state DD/MR and MH offices.

The group also recommended that OSERS identify examples from across the country of model usage of Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) and SSA-PASS funds for supported employment long-term support. This information should then be disseminated nationwide, including step-by-step instructions for applying and suggested formats and examples.

Additionally, it was recommended that OSERS and ADD might provide incentives to states to more accurately track client data by developing sound state data systems. Further, these agencies could fund a project that reviews and analyzes all current data systems in order to determine which are most useful. Such comparisons would help determine how to more effectively provide training and follow-along for the least cost and would

Table 3

Other Challenges to Solving Problems Associated with the Current Federal Model of Long-Term Funding

1. Building a relationship and understanding between OSERS and state DD/MR and MH agencies
2. Making supported employment a preferred option for persons with severe disabilities
3. Providing start-up dollars and incentives for conversion from sheltered employment
4. Working with businesses to share in the cost of providing long-term support
5. Funding or gaining access for transporting clients to and from work
6. Figuring out how school can better utilize funds from P.L. 98-199 to provide supported employment services
7. Ensuring that state policy providing for supported employment will continue after the demonstration grants cease
8. Making greater use of Job Training Partership Act funds
9. Consideration of using federal supported employment monies to fund both time-limited and long-term support services

also help determine best ways to prevent job loss.

A fourth recommendation for using existing funds suggests that OSERS explore ways in which businesses can help provide long-term support to its employees trained through supported employment programs.

Policy change. Some of the recommendations ultimately involve a change in current federal and state policies. The following ideas may help lead to such changes.

First, it is recommended that OSERS take a leadership role in working with the states to inform Congressional members and staff and Health and Human Services (HHS) staff of the inconsistencies, misunderstanding, and lack of common purpose that exist within the federal government specific to the Title XIX ICF-MR program. OSERS could fund projects to study a comparison of costs and benefits associated with Medicaid recipients receiving a supported employment service and those who are not. OSERS could also, in conjunction with the states, seek legislation or policy change which would permit Medicaid recipients residing in ICF-MRs to receive supported employment services, thus qualifying supported employment as an eligible Title XIX service.

Second, it is recommended that OSERS, in conjunction with the states, seek an agreement with SSA to pilot programs which would allow some of the SSI savings which result when SSI recipients work to be retained by the states in order to place, train, and provide ongoing support to additional SSI recipients.

Third, participants proposed that OSERS and ADD should jointly develop some national guidelines for how state vocational rehabilitation agencies can develop collaborative plans with other agencies to assure long-term funding.

New appropriations. The final set of recommendations involves appropriating additional revenue through OSERS. Most importantly, there should be more funded projects which help consumers, parents, relatives, and guardians more fully participate in supported employment. Parents, in particular, would benefit from assistance in working with legislators and other politicians and advocacy groups in ensuring sources of long-term support.

Summary

Each of the recommendations above requires an enormous amount of energy and effort to result in the desired outcome. We must be realistic and assume that we possess only a limited amount of energy, personpower, and resources to affect change. The potential results of each strategy must be weighed against the energy we will have to expend to achieve the desired outcome.

It is also important to note how difficult it is to change the federal system. Such ideas as those delineated above may be applied at the state and local level with greater sucess. It may well be that the most effective federal change comes only after many more states demonstrate a variety of ways to ensure long-term funding for supported employment.

The Need to Develop Community Support Networks

The second issue chosen for discussion by this group concerned the need to develop community support networks including the long-term funding of supported employment. There was only enough time to briefly list elements of the issue, progress, and challenges which led participants to some recommendations. Each of these is noted in Tables 4 through 6. Certainly, each of these topics needs further, more in-depth analysis.

Table 4

Elements Pertaining to Community Support Networks

1. Defining "community groups" -- family, friends, employers, coworkers, service providers, agencies and schools, employment services, unions, civic groups, local government bodies and politicians, volunteer groups, churches, media, advocacy groups
2. Deciphering community values and attitudes
3. Determining various local funding sources -- JTPA, public school funds, United Way, private foundations, city/county funds, case service dollars
4. Establishing trust/estate planning
5. Building employer interest
6. Building parental/community trust
7. Setting fee for service arrangements with a variety of competent vendors
8. Arranging for appropriate transportation options
9. Establishing educational programs for all community groups

Table 5

Progress in Community Support Provision

1. Better community living programs
2. Passage of community-based legislation
3. Increased media involvement
4. Increased business interest/investment
5. Growth of employee-owned businesses
6. More imaginative integrated work settings
7. Scattered examples of complex community support systems across the nation

Table 6

Challenges in Providing Community Support Networks

1. Keeping community supports natural
2. Obtaining education and information in this area
3. Changing local values and attitudes
4. Getting start-up funds for model demonstrations in this area
5. Evaluating effectiveness of local support systems
6. Dealing with local politics in effecting change

The concept "community involvement" or "community networks" means different things to different people. Sometimes it is used to mean opportunities for social and physical integration or community "presence and participation". For others, it implies social networking. It may be difficult at first to see why local community involvement relates to funding. However, we know that long-term support issues are broader than just monetary sources. Support systems are involved in keeping individuals employed, including residential options, recreational alternatives, transportation systems, family and friends, medical services, and many other factors. A close examination of all these leads to the idea of "local responsibility" within each community.

Elements

The long-term funding working group delineated many elements within a community that must be explored in order to provide long-term support to persons in supported employment. These are listed in Table 4.

Progress and Challenges

The group also briefly listed some of the progress communities have made in this area and some of the challenges facing us on the local level. Tables 5 and 6 summarize these ideas.

Recommendations

Several recommendations are presented here, most of which involve federal initiatives. First, it was recommended that OSERS fund projects that specifically deal with community networking. Such projects should ultimately help identify communities that provide complex, long-term supports. This information should then be disseminated nationwide. These projects should also help determine how to measure outcomes of such efforts in terms of consumer benefits and increased community participation.

A second recommendation focused on OSERS working directly with the current state-change grants to encourage greater local commitment to supported employment. Should new monies become available to continue these projects, the funds should be directed to local systems involvement.

A third recommendation was for making federal and state grants available to local communities to educate families and advocacy groups and businesses regarding the value of supported employment.

Summary

The entire service system for people with severe disabilities is moving in the direction of questioning the impact of employment on an individual's quality of life and whether a person actually benefits from services. Employment is only part of the picture and must be taken in context with the rest of the individual's world. We are also becoming more aware of how important it is for an individual to have natural experiences and natural relationships as opposed to those which can be purchased. We can purchase assistance from an ongoing support system, but acknowledge that it is not really natural support and will only be there if a contract exists and funds are behind it. Perhaps we are seeing that there is something bigger, more powerful, with the potential of providing long-term stability and continuity. Right now, there are no answers, only a multitude of questions concerning how best to start investigating this issue. The possibilities are exciting!

Technical Assistance and Staff Development in Supported Employment

Jane Everson
Virginia Commonwealth University

Candace O'Neill
O'Neill and Associates
Seattle, Washington

Technical Assistance and Staff Development

in Supported Employment

Working Group

Moderator: Candace O'Neill, O'Neill and Associates

Facilitator: Jane Everson, VCU-RRTC

Working Group Participants:

Phil Bourbeau	Supported Employment Resource Project
Susanne Bruyere	Cornell University
Russ Cusack	Alaska Vocational Rehabilitation Services
Steve Dunaway	Florida Deparment of Health and Rehabilitation Services
Karen Flippo	University of San Francisco
Barbara Garono	Akron Goodwill
Mark Hill	Virginia Department of Mental Health/Mental Retardation/Substance Abuse Services
Ronald House	Cornell University
John R. Johnson	University of Illinois
Terry Marsh	Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation
Anne O'Bryan	Electronic Assembly Services, Alexandria, Virginia
Dave Raymond	Delaware Supported Employment Services
Gary R. Ulicny	University of Kansas

Technical Assistance and Staff Development in Supported Employment

Adequately prepared personnel are the cornerstone of effective supported employment programs. The need to prepare personnel at preservice, inservice, and technical assistance levels to staff supported employment programs has been recognized nationally as a critical program management and implementation issue. Within the broad area of supported employment personnel preparation, however, there has been little consensus to date on the most appropriate training needs assessments, training objectives, curricula, training strategies, target audiences, or training or performance evaluation methods.

Identification of Technical Assistance and Staff Development Issues

During an hour-long brainstorming session, the technical assistance and staff development working group, which included university faculty, state and local agency personnel, and private staff training consultants, generated 20 broad issues within supported employment personnel preparation. Table 1 presents a breakdown of the 20 generated issues. Following the brainstorming session, a Delphi process was used to prioritize the top three issues. The Delphi process enabled members of the working group to individually vote on their top three issues. The top three issues across the entire group were then selected for further discussion during the remainder of the working session. Table 1 also presents the number of votes each issue received during the Delphi process.

As a result of the Delphi process, the top three issues were: 1) evaluation; 2) multiple-level training; and 3) assessment. Group members generally felt that the majority of the 20 issues in the initial list could be incorporated as elements under one or more of these three issues. The

Table 1

Issues Generated by Technical Assistance and Staff Development Working Group

Issue	Number of Votes Received
Evaluation of training effectiveness	11
Cross agency/multiple level training	9
Development of assessment systems to drive technical assistance	7
Sequence of training: Who? What? When? Where?	6
Generalization of staff performance: ability of staff to problem solve	6
Systematic/replicable training model	6
Training of mid-level staff	5
Leverage of resources	5
Selection of training recipients	3
Training versus technical assistance	3
Who trains? Creative training ideas?	3
Ongoing training	3
Populations other than individuals with mental retardation including individuals with the most challenging behaviors	2
Re-training/appreciation of staff	2
Supporting clients without stigmatizing them	1
Practicum experiences	0
Salaries versus performance of staff	0
Resources/funding for trainers to stay current on issues	0
Crisis training	0
Management/financial function for trainers	0

participants decided to restate the three prioritized issues to incorporate the remaining 17 issues. During the ensuing discussion, consensus was reached on the following three issues:

Issue #1: How can technical assistance and staff development needs be accurately assessed to ensure that training is relevant, curricula and objectives are determined by the assessed needs of all of the target participants, and training efforts are coordinated and non-duplicative?

Issue #2: What are the supported employment training issues that should be addressed by technical assistance and staff development projects and personnel in order to enhance the creation and maintenance of employment opportunities for individuals with severe disabilities?

Issue #3: How can technical assistance and staff development efforts be evaluated to assess the impact of training on trainees and individuals with severe disabilities in effecting quality supported employment opportunities?

The working group agreed that the final three issues selected for discussion incorporated the ideas and thoughts behind all 20 issues, and therefore the ideas and thoughts of all group members. The issues were re-ordered to reflect the natural sequence of training and technical assistance as: 1) assessment, 2) training content, and 3) evaluation.

Foundation for Discussing Major Issues

The working group strongly agreed that discussion of all three issues must focus upon all individuals identified as potential recipients of technical assistance and preservice and inservice staff development. In response to this need, the working group identified a multi-level matrix to serve as a foundation for discussion of each of the issues. Three levels of potential training recipients were identified: 1) systems level; 2) provider level; and 3) consumer level. Systems level refers to personnel involved in the establishment and enforcement of policy related to supported employment. The provider level is defined as all personnel that are responsible for the implementation of supported employment services within a community. The third level, consumer level, includes individuals who are candidates for supported employment as well as family members, users, and purchasers of supported employment services. Table 2 elaborates on the potential trainees included at each level.

The use of a multi-level matrix enabled the group to visually present the interrelatedness between the three issues and the three levels of training recipients. The working group agreed that this matrix must include all personnel and consumers who receive and provide training and technical assistance. The training matrix developed by the group is illustrated in Table 3.

Elements

Upon reaching consensus as to the top three issues and developing a matrix within which to frame the three issues, the remainder of the working session was spent identifying the elements or components of each issue across all three recipient levels. The three targeted issues were viewed as necessarily interrelated, with assessment procedures driving selection of training content and selection and delivery of training content driving evaluation procedures. Similarly, the elements or components of each issue were viewed as necessarily interrelated across training recipient levels. The working group identified some elements as specific to only one level and other elements cutting across two or all three levels.

Table 2

Potential Target Trainees Across Levels

Level 1: Systems Level (defined as federal, state, local funding agencies and policymakers above the provider level)

- State/local agency directors/staff in:
  - vocational rehabilitation
  - special and vocational education
  - mental health/mental retardation/developmental disabilities
  - social security
- Legislators and staff
- Community boards
- Universities
- Professional associations

Level 2: Provider Level (defined as managerial and direct service supported employment personnel)

- Supported employment managerial and direct service staff
- Sheltered workshop staff
- Teachers

Level 3: Consumer Level (defined as individuals with disabilities who are candidates for supported employment services as well as family members and users and purchasers of supported employment services)

- Supported employment candidates
- Parents
- Advocacy groups
- Case managers
- Vocational rehabilitation counselors
- Employers

Table 3

Training Matrix

		LEVEL		
		Systems	Provider	Consumer
ISSUE	Assessment	How should assessment be conducted?	How should assessment be conducted?	How should assessment be conducted?
	Training Content	What issues should be addressed?	What issues should be addressed?	What issues should be addressed?
	Evaluation	What data should be collected?	What data should be collected?	What data should be collected?

Issue #1: Assessment

How can technical assistance and staff development needs be accurately assessed to ensure that training is relevant, curricula and objectives are determined by the assessed needs of all of the target participants, and training efforts are coordinated and non-duplicative?

Issue #1, technical assistance and staff development needs, was described as consisting of critical but frequently overlooked elements of training. Multi-level needs assessments conducted prior to the identification and delivery of training content would enable staff trainers to more accurately meet the training needs of all recipients. Use of comprehensive needs assessments would also ensure training that results in identifiable and measurable changes in consumer outcomes. The following is a listing of the elements of technical assistance and staff development needs identified for each level of potential trainees.

Systems Level Elements:

- identify desired outcomes of supported employment programs
- baseline existing supported employment programs' outcomes
- identify currently available interagency and transdisciplinary resources
- develop assessment methodology
- target recipient groups for assessment
- determine costs of assessment
- determine consumer satisfaction measures

Provider Level Elements:

- identify desired outcomes of supported employment programs
- baseline existing supported employment programs' outcomes
- identify currently available interagency and transdisciplinary resources
- develop assessment methodology
- target recipient groups for assessment
- determine costs of assessment
- determine consumer satisfaction measures
- assess social and cultural contributions that are unique to provider
- assess local economic and other community considerations that are unique to provider

Consumer Level Elements:

- identify desired outcomes of supported employment programs
- baseline existing supported employment programs' outcomes
- identify currently available interagency and transdisciplinary resources
- develop assessment methodology
- target recipient groups for assessment
- determine costs of assessment
- determine consumer satisfaction measures
- assess social and cultural contributions that are unique to provider
- assess local economic and other community considerations that are unique to provider
- assess trainee satisfaction with training

Issue #2: Training Content

What are the supported employment training issues that should be addressed by technical assistance and staff development projects and personnel in order to enhance the creation and maintenance of employment opportunities for individuals with severe disabilities?

Issue #2, the identification of training content, is perhaps the most fully developed issue within supported employment personnel preparation issues. To date, however, the training materials and programs currently available are fragmented, limited in client population issues, and limited in program orientation. Training content must be better coordinated among the leading providers, perhaps through a national supported employment clearinghouse, and must be more responsive to the needs of consumers with a variety of severe disabilities and programs with a variety of demographic needs. With these thoughts in mind, the following broad elements were identifed as being important to include as training content.

Systems Level Elements:

- strategies for increasing consumer involvement and participation in decision-making
- interpretation of supported employment program regulations and strategies for policy development
- transition planning and implementation issues
- benefit/cost analyses and other mechanisms for program evaluation
- interagency collaboration/team building

- consumer outcome evaluation mechanisms
- funding structures, re-direction, and acquisition
- training and technical assistance delivery

Provider Level Elements:

- values/goal clarification
- job development
- job analysis
- consumer/job matching
- systematic instruction
- data collection
- generalization and maintenance
- job accommodation/restructuring
- non-aversive behavioral techniques
- alternative communication systems
- quality assurance
- budgeting/fiscal management
- proposal writing
- data-based problem-solving
- benefit/cost analysis
- staff recruitment/hiring

Consumer Level Elements

- knowledge of and definitions of supported employment programs
- self-advocacy training and choicemaking
- methods for accessing service systems
- career planning
- employee rights and benefits
- social relationships on job sites

Issue #3: Evaluation

How can technical assistance and staff development efforts be evaluated to assess the impact of training on trainees and individuals with severe disabilities in effecting quality supported employment opportunities?

Issue #3, evaluation of supported employment training, must be viewed multi-dimensionally to reflect recipient satisfaction with training and use of content and to reflect changes in employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. Evaluation, both formative and summative, is a critical issue in developing new technical assistance programs and in refining existing preservice personnel preparation programs. The participants identified data that should be used to evaluate training efforts for each of the categories of training recipients. These elements are listed below.

Systems Level:

- aggregate employee outcomes
- benefit/cost analysis
- number and impact of interagency cooperative agreements
- quality of life changes in employees
- target populations placed in supported employment placements
- numbers and attitudes of employers using supported employment services
- poverty level index changes across employee groups
- cumulative investment analysis
- alternative program costs
- policy changes
- employee attitudes and satisfaction

Provider Level:

- number of jobs filled
- cumulative wages earned
- assess elements of program to determine degrees of supported employment program implementation
- assess outcomes of programs to determine degrees of supported employment program implementation

Consumer Level:

- trend analysis
- relationship mapping
- community mapping
- social validation of training methods
- benefit/cost analysis

Progress and Resources

The technical assistance and staff development working group developed a list of known resources for each of the three issues. Table 4 outlines a sample of known resources nationally. The working group recognized that this list of resources is not exhaustive, but felt that it identified a representative sample of resources across the three issues discussed in this chapter. The group agreed that most of the progress in the area of personnel preparation for supported employment personnel has been made in the area of training content and format (Issue #2), whereas very little progress has been made in the area of training needs assessments (Issue #1) or training evaluation efforts (Issue #3).

Several group members voiced concern that even with the abundance of preservice and inservice staff development programs available nationally

Table 4

Progress and Resources

Issue #1

Virginia Commonwealth University-Rehabilitation Research and Training Center Training Needs Assessment Survey of the OSERS Funded Title III States

Virginia Commonwealth University-Rehabilitation Research and Training Center Survey of Supported Employment Personnel in RSA Region III

Oregon State-wide "800 Hotline"

Issue #2

University of San Francisco Training Activities

Boston University Chronically Mentally Ill Network of Training Activities

University of Oregon Training Activities

Supported Employment Management Simulation (SEMS) at Cornell University

O'Neill & Associates National Leadership Institute for Supported Employment

Community Services for Autistic Adults and Children (CSAAC) Training Programs

Virginia Commonwealth University-Rehabilitation Research and Training Center Preservice/Inservice Training Programs

Supported Employment Educator Training Coalition

Multitude of Books/Audio-Visual Materials

Issue #3

Personal Futures Planning

Corporation for Supported Employment (CSE) Guide for Program Evaluation

University of Illinois Degrees of Implementation (DOI)

(Issue #2), there are limits in the supported employment models and/or populations of individuals with disabilities they cover. Expansion of training programs already in existence and development of a national clearinghouse were suggested as mechanisms for meeting existing gaps and reducing duplication efforts. The lack of systematic and replicable training curricula across target populations, across models, and across communities was voiced throughout the day as a critical personnel preparation concern.

Limited assessment and evaluation resources were identified by this group (i.e., systems level, provider level, consumer level) and were felt to accurately reflect the shortage of resources for these two issues. The development of new and replicable resources for assessing training needs and evaluating training curricula were of primary concern to the technical assistance and staff development working group.

Challenges and Work to be Done

The technical assistance and staff development working group identified 14 statements that summarize the work that remains to be done in the area of personnel preparation for supported employment staff. These statements are summarized below:

1. Technical assistance and staff development must always benefit individuals with disabilities. Comprehensive needs assessments and evaluation systems must be developed to meet this need.

2. Current technical assistance/staff development resources are inadequate. Coordination of existing efforts through planned national dissemination and equal funding priorities on inservice and technical assistance as well as preservice will help to meet this need.

3. Typically, emphasis is on staff development instead of technical assistance; however, technical assistance must begin to be viewed as a necessary component of staff development. Priority must begin to be placed on ongoing training and support efforts instead of "one shot" efforts.

4. Staff development efforts must be increased and made a priority at the systems, provider, and consumer levels. Trainers must conduct comprehensive and multi-level needs assessments and evaluations to meet this need.

5. A systematic and replicable training curriculum must be developed. Coordination and validation of existing efforts will help to meet this need.

6. Staff development efforts must be driven by multi-level needs assessments at the systems, provider, and consumer levels.

7. Staff development priorities must be determined to ensure ongoing technical assistance and eliminate one-shot training activities.

8. Training accomplishments and benefits to individuals with disabilities should be emphasized over research of training effectiveness.

9. Trainers must be kept current on supported employment management and implementation issues. Coordination and validation of existing efforts will help to meet this need as will support for "train-the-trainer" programs.

10. On-call technical assistance should be provided to local programs. State-wide and local programs should be developed to network with national dissemination efforts.

11. Program managers should be provided with team building and systems change skills. Expansion of existing curricula and materials to include application across models and target populations will help to meet this need.

12. Provide employment specialists and other direct service providers with the skills to empower individuals with disabilities.

13. Provide employment specialists with the skills to integrate themselves into job sites.

14. Evaluate the effect of staff development activities on supported employment program outcomes and employee outcomes. Develop multi-level evaluation procedures to help meet this need.

These statements form the basis for the need to design a multi-level needs assessment and curriculum development and delivery model. Participants felt strongly that a more integrated approach in the delivery of inservice training and technical assistance for supported employment personnel is critically needed. Such an approach must incorporate a needs assessment and training delivery strategy which responds to the unique skill needs of each target audience. Also, the provision of ongoing technical assistance for reinforcement of training and support to personnel should become standard practice.

No longer can states rely on the few federally funded training projects across the country for the provision of training to meet all of their needs. States must embrace the ideas outlined in this chapter and incorporate them into the development of local state capacity for the provision of training to their constituency. The federal government must provide leadership in the development of training capacity within each state and coordination and support for communication and information exchange among these state training operations. Additionally, a mechanism for identifying, coordinating, and disseminating current research information and practices related to supported employment management and service delivery on a nationwide basis is imperative.

Summary

The staff development and technical assistance working group felt that all personnel preparation activities in supported employment should result in changes in outcomes for individuals with disabilities. Although tremendous effort has been made in supported employment personnel activities, much work remains to be done. It was strongly felt that the development of a comprehensive training curriculum that could be individualized to the needs of target trainees at all levels, provide ongoing technical assistance, improve employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities, and keep trainers abreast of current research and practices is a critical challenge to supported employment proponents.

Target trainees at all levels must be provided with technical skills and problem-solving abilities to create integration opportunities on job sites, manage systems and program changes, reduce isolation and devaluing of staff, and build interagency and interprogram teams.

Issues Forum: A Change in Expectations

David Mank

University of Oregon

Issues Forum: A Change in Expectations

The Issues Forum provided an opportunity for implementors and advocates from 30 states and the federal government to discuss ideas and problems in supported employment and to engage in an analysis of issues in ways not possible even a year ago. Less than three years since the funding of the first supported employment systems change grants, this forum reflected the difference between beginning a nationwide initiative and broad implementation which requires more thorough systems change. Forum participants, individually and collectively, affirmed that supported employment is no longer a newly framed idea, nor is it an initiative concerned only with scattered demonstrations about what is possible. Rather, supported employment is about widespread access to community jobs for people with severe disabilities.

There is more than one way to consider the nature of this forum. It is reasonable to review each issue addressed and consider the strategies discussed in each area for improving implementation. And it is entirely appropriate to consider the Issues Forum in terms of specific issues and ideas. Implementors and advocates will find ideas for merit in each chapter.

However, there is another way to consider the nature of this forum. That is in terms of a central message that is unavoidable if we consider the nature of the discussions and a single underlying theme: Supported employment has changed our expectations about what is possible and what must be done to make decent jobs in integrated settings an outcome for people with severe disabilities.

Not very long ago every demonstration that people with severe disabilities could successfully live and work in communities was cause for celebration, and appropriately so. It still is, in terms of the importance of change in quality of life from segregation to integration, from sitting on the outskirts of society to full participation in community life. Even so, recent months mark a change in the expectations of advocates and implementors alike. Now, every time supported employment works it also brings the painful awareness of the many individuals who could benefit from integrated employment but simply do not have access at this time. We no longer expect "demonstration" of the value of the idea. Now, we expect full access with quality in outcomes for all persons who will benefit. No longer are implementors and advocates satisfied with finding some way, any way, to "adjust" the system into funding or allowing supported employment. Now, we expect and must build a system for quality and access that makes sense and works.

Each issue of the Forum represents an area critical for successful implementation of supported employment:

- Systems Change/Conversion
- Integration and Empowerment
- In-State Economic Development and Marketing
- Long-Term Funding
- Technical Assistance and Staff Development

Individually and together, these issues represent both progress and new needs that require attention.

Systems Change/Conversion

Systems change -- the catch phrase of supported employment. Not very long ago, supported employment implementors and advocates were encouraged wherever policy, regulation, funding, and organizational structures allowed supported employment. Now, our collective expectation is that our systems must provide real access to integrated jobs as the heart, not the fringe, of the day services system. This work group framed systems change on a foundation of a clear vision of integration, with access to adequate resources that provide integration and a sensible process for expanding implementation. It is no longer news that supported employment can be done given our present day services system. The issue now is managing a system that works every time so that a person with severe disabilities will benefit from an integrated job with support for long-term success.

Integration and Empowerment

One group struggled with the often discussed but seldom managed issues of integration and empowerment of individuals. The message that emerged: Integration must be a central part of supported employment in all aspects of marketing, job matching, training, and supporting individuals in employment; not an afterthought, not an add-on, but the centerpiece of supported employment. The change in expectation associated with integration and empowerment is this: participation, acceptance, and choice, not mere presence. A clear line is now drawn between the capacity or the potential employment settings for integration and the actual outcomes of integration and improvements in quality of life. Promoting integration moves fom "place and hope" for integration to seeking specific strategies to gently encourage connections between people and opportunities for meaningful relationships.

In-State Economic Development and Marketing

Marketing: creating access to jobs within existing businesses.

Economic Development: creating jobs and income through business development.

Implementors of supported employment declare a change in expectations by tackling issues of broad marketing and state level economic development.

The change in expectations is this: we have been successful in developing one job at a time for persons with severe disabilities. However, now we can enrich the climate of the business environment and walk through the front door of corporate offices and state economic development departments. No favors from business are needed, no charity requested. Only partnerships -- and labor force needs to be matched up with competent employees.

Long-Term Funding

Clarity and simplicity, accountability with flexibility in the policy and use of funding resources. Two statements defined the task for the working group on long-term funding: "There is a lack of comprehensive, coherent federal policy enhancing long-term funding of supported employment" and there is "a need to develop community support networks, including funding, for supported employment."

As in the systems change work group, a central theme that emerged throughout the forum is this: our expectation now is that a stable, coherent funding policy and mechanism must be available every time it is needed.

Technical Assistance and Staff Development

The values base of supported employment helps implementors to do the right thing. Good skills, good training, and individualized assistance help implementors do things right. The working group on training and technical assistance served notice that skill building and problem solving efforts in states must be accountable, must address the range and scope of critical content areas, and must involve many people in diverse roles in supported employment. It is insufficient to "have" training and technical assistance projects. Rather, the issue is now framed in terms of needs being met, people getting jobs, and problems getting solved.

Three areas of focus were established for training and assistance areas. First, information and assistance needs must be carefully identified. We can no longer provide training on suspected needs. Second, content must be relevant to the central outcome of people with severe disabilities getting real community jobs. Third, training and technical assistance must be both accountable and effective. In addition, information and assistance must be available for people in the social service system, people in provider agencies, and persons with disabilities and their families.

One unstated but implied message for training and technical assistance is this: supported employment requires ongoing innovation; recipes are insufficient for expanding progress. A spirit of change, feedback, and ongoing support is required on the part of all players.

Summary

The Issues Forum: a time for sharing knowledge and ideas, grappling with another level of issues and problems created by broad demonstrations of the promise of community jobs. A time for enlarging the ownership of ideas and solutions. Implementors of supported employment addressing a fundamental issue: widespread implementation of integrated jobs for people with severe disabilities without forfeiting quality.

The Issues Forum: marking a change in expectations from beginning a social change initiative to extending the reality of integrated jobs with long-term support to all persons with severe disabilities.

Virginia Commonwealth University
is an equal opportunity affirmative action institution.